











# THE FAMILY

OF

## ST. RICHARD, THE SAXON.

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St. Richard, King.

St. Willibald, Bishop.

St. Walburga, Virgin, Abbess.

St. Winibald, Abbot.

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THE Editor of the Life of St. Stephen Harding is concerned to find that he should have so expressed himself about it as to be mistaken by some persons for the Author.

He thought he had sufficiently guarded against such an accident by his reference, in the Advertisement, to an earlier Prospectus, in which Lives of the English Saints, *by various Authors*, were promised under his *Editorship*, and by his statement that the Lives now published formed portions of that Series.

J. H. N.

April 1, 1844.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE following pages were put to press with the view of forming part of a series of Lives of English Saints, according to a prospectus which appeared in the course of last autumn, but which has since, for private reasons, been superseded. As it is not the only work undertaken in pursuance of the plan then in contemplation, it is probable, that, should it meet with success, other Lives, now partly written, will be published in a similar form by their respective authors on their own responsibility.

The question will naturally suggest itself to the reader, whether the miracles recorded in these narratives, especially those contained in the Life of St. Walburga, are to be received as matters of fact; and in this day and under our present circumstances we can only reply, that there is no reason why they should not be. They are the kind of facts proper to ecclesiastical history, just as instances of sagacity and daring, personal prowess or crime, are the facts proper to secular history. And if

the tendency of credulity or superstition to exaggerate and invent creates a difficulty in the reception of facts ecclesiastical, so does the existence of party spirit, private interests, personal attachments, malevolence, and the like, call for caution and criticism in the reception of facts secular and civil. There is little or nothing, then, *primâ facie*, in the miraculous accounts in question to repel a properly taught and religiously disposed mind; which will, accordingly, give them a prompt and hearty acquiescence, or a passive admission, or receive them in part, or hold them in suspense, or absolutely reject them, according as the evidence makes for or against them, or is or is not of a trustworthy character.

As to the miracles ascribed to St. Walburga, it must be remembered that she is one of the principal Saints of her age and country. "Scarcely any of the illustrious females of Old or New Testament can be named," says J. Basnage, "who has had so many heralds of her praises as Walburga; for, not to speak of her own brother Willibald, who is reported, without foundation, to have been his sister's panegyrist, six writers are extant, who have employed themselves in relating the deeds or miracles of Walburga;—Wolfhart, Adelbold, Medibard, Adelbert, Philip, and the nuns of St. Walburga's monastery."—Ap. Canis. Lect. Ant. t. ii. part iii. p. 265.

Nor was this renown the mere natural growth of ages. It begins within the very century of the Saint's death. At the end of that time Wolfhard, a monk of

the diocese of Aichstadt, where her relics lay, drew up an account of her life, and of certain miracles which had been wrought in the course of three years, about the time he wrote, by a portion of her relics bestowed upon the monastery of Monheim in Bavaria; his information, at least in part, coming from the monk who had the placing of the sacred treasure in its new abode. The two mentioned below, p. 88, seem the only miracles which were distinctly reported of her as occurring in her lifetime, and they were handed down apparently by tradition: "*hæc duo tantum præclara miracula,*" says Wolfhard, "*quæ Virgo beata peregit in vitâ, huic inserere dignum putavi opusculo, quæ nostram ad memoriam pervenere.*" He speaks of the miracles after her death as "*quæ hactenus Dominus per eam operatus est, et operatur quotidie;*" and of their beginning shortly after her death (A.D. 777 or 780), "*parvo interjecto tempore,*" though those recorded do not commence till the episcopate of Otkar, whom Henschenius considers to have been a bishop of the Council of Mayence in 848, while others place him some years later, that is, in Wolfhard's own time.

Wolfhard speaks distinctly of the miraculous oil (vid. below, p. 96) as then dropping: "*invenerunt cineres,*" he says, speaking of the date, 893, "*quasi lymphâ tenui madefactos, ut quasi guttatim ab eis roris stillæ extorqueri valerent.*" Also Philip, Bishop of Aichstadt, A.D. 1306, one of the biographers of the Saint, as above-mentioned, speaks of the existence of the oil in his day: "*miracula usque in hodiernum diem*

continuata feliciter crebescunt. Nam de membris ejus virgineis, maxime tamen pectoralibus, sacrum emanat oleum, quod gratiâ Dei et intercessione B. Walpurgæ Virginis cæcos illuminat, surdos audire facit," &c. Nay, he speaks of his own recovery, by means of it, from a critical illness: "Phialam plenam ebibimus; eâdem die creticavimus, et brevi pòst in tempore, sanitati omnimodè restituti sumus." The nuns of Aichstadt, who drew up the epitome at an unknown date, but after the invention of printing, say the same thing; Mabill. Act. Bened. s. sec. 3. p. 2. p. 307. Rader, in his *Bavaria Sacra* (1615), speaks of cures in his time, one of which was told him by the subject of it; and Gretser, in like manner, speaks of the miracle as then existing (1620), "videas guttas modò majores, modò minores," &c. and has written a treatise in defence of it.

It may be right to add, that Mabillon, in his edition of Wolfhard's work, professes to omit, without assigning reason, some of the miracles it contains: which J. Basnage attributes to disbelief of them: "Mabilonius, vir acutæ naris, plurima ex singulis libris omisit, nec sibi metuens lectorem monuit." Moreover, a report has come down to us, that at one time Wolfhard himself was put into prison by Erconwold, the Bishop at whose instance he had written, "cum graviter contra Episcopum deliquisset," "in consequence of grave offences against the Bishop."

J. H. N.

LITTLEMORE,  
Feb. 21, 1844.

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LIFE OF  
**St. Richard,**

KING OF THE WEST SAXONS.—DIED 722.

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RELIGION produces great fruits when it has found a strong deep soil in which it may grow. Its majestic principles then find room and supply enough to spring out into their stature. Such were the hearts of our Saxon ancestors, when newly won over to the Faith. Their firm resolve, and bold determination of character, when brought under the power of Christianity, led to examples of stern uncompromising sacrifice.

This remark will aid to explain the striking scene which their history presents at the close of the seventh century, when we see kings counting thrones as nothing, and freely casting away their crowns, to follow in simplicity the poverty of the cross. Kenred king of Mercia, Offa prince of East Angles<sup>1</sup>, Ceadwal and Ina of West Angles, gave a new lesson to mankind; and the world, astonished, beheld warriors and princes resign their pride and glory as a burden, and choose, as some

<sup>1</sup> Bede; Ecc. Hist. V. xix.

better thing, the meek and lowly service of religion. The example was stirring, and naturally drew others after it; a succession of devout wanderers left their English homes, seeking the spots which the Apostles had trod, Rome and the Holy Land. "About this time," says Bede, speaking of the beginning of the eighth century, "multitudes of English people did so commonly, both of high rank, and of low estate, clergy and laity, and women too as well<sup>2</sup>."

Saint Richard is to be reckoned among the number of the men of birth spoken of in this passage. Little can be positively ascertained of his early history and parentage, or even of his title to the name of king. No written life is preserved of him, except some brief accounts of later date, compiled from scanty notices and from the lives of his three children. That he was of royal descent seems allowed. His sons are spoken of as "the sons of a king," and his daughter as "a king's daughter." His kinsman St. Boniface is said to be "of royal blood." His mother is called the sister of some Offa, but whether of East Angles or some other is disputable. The place of the kingdom assigned to him is determined by the statement, "that St. Boniface was born in his kingdom." The birth-place of St. Boniface was Kirton (Crediton) in Devon, so that this account would give him some portion of the kingdom of the West Angles; and localities incidentally mentioned would bring his residence to some part of Hampshire or Kent.

Probably he was one of the rich thanes or subreguli, among whom the Saxons were at times divided. Such was the case for ten years between the death of Kentwin

<sup>2</sup> Ecc. Hist. V. vii.

and the reign of Ceadwall<sup>3</sup>, and again in the time of Æthelhard the successor of Ina. In the year 686, Ceadwall reduced the whole; subduing the petty kings, and adding the Isle of Wight, which St. Wilfrid had converted from idolatry to Christianity<sup>4</sup>.

In the period between Kentwin and Ina, St. Richard was born, according to the Bollandists, in the reign of Ceadwall<sup>5</sup>. "From his childhood he was deeply imbued with Christianity." These few words contain the sum of what is known of his early life. But though brief, they say much. Natural strength of character, noble birth and wealth, are nothing positive in themselves; they imply increase of trial and larger capacity of good or evil: but when deep feelings and great powers are brought under the control of sublime principles, then it is that men are framed, excelling in action, and mighty in influence. The soul of man seems then like some powerful instrument touched by a master-hand, and brought out into full play. Therefore, little more needs to be added to the simple statement that, born in circumstance a wealthy and noble prince, he was early a devout Christian.

Tradition connects him with St. Ina<sup>6</sup>, and his mother with the royal Mercian race. Such education

<sup>3</sup> Gul. Malmsb. Vit. Aldhelmi. Lib. V. De Pont. Sec. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Florentius Vigorn. Chronic. an. 686.

<sup>5</sup> According to the historian Hume, St. Richard was son of Lothaire king of Kent, and this is borne out by the Salisbury Service book, in which he is so called; the last is of great authority, and this would make the date of his birth considerably earlier, as Lothaire was spoiled of his kingdom by Ceadwall.

<sup>6</sup> Bolland. Feb. vii. Vita S. Ricardi, Præf. V. 25.

and extraction well befitted one who was to be the father of a family of saints. Staid and settled characters of habitual piety and gravity, when joined to a courteous behaviour and noble open bearing, form the true model of the head of a household. Such men are found faithful to their trust, and bring up their children after them in gentle reverence and willing obedience. His wife and queen, according to tradition, was Winna the sister of Winfrid, the great St. Boniface, at that time, in the year seven hundred, a monk in the monastery of Nutschelle in Dorset, and about twenty years of age. Winna bore him two sons, who were named Willibald and Winibald. Willibald is usually supposed to be the youngest by three years, and the dates of their respective births are set, of Winibald at 701, and Willibald 704. But there seems good reason for giving the priority of age to Willibald, and altering their births to the successive years 701 and 702. Winibald is argued to be the eldest, on the sole ground of a date which cannot be certainly verified. And there is considerable evidence on the other side. St. Willibald is always placed first in order in the authentic documents of their lives. This to be sure does not prove much, for being the more distinguished saint he might naturally be put first, and the deference paid to him by his brother, and the leading decisive part he takes in their history, as well as the precedence given him by St. Boniface their uncle, might be explained in the same way; but the writer of their lives, who is plainly familiar with their early circumstances, and who is supposed to be St. Walberga herself, their younger sister, speaks expressly in the story of his early sickness, that his parents grieved for him as their “repre-

sentative and heir," and in the tradition and prayer at Aichstadt, where he was bishop, he is solemnly named as "heir to an English throne."

It is observed by an old writer, that it is a peculiar feature of the English Saxons, that many holy saints are found in one family together<sup>7</sup>. Perhaps this pleasing circumstance is to be connected with, and explained by that domestic cast of character which seems to be national. A holy family is the highest image the mind can conceive; and if it is interesting to mark the working of the power of Christianity on individual biography, as it subdues and moulds, like a refining fire, the several ingredients of an earthly temper, and brings them out into a heavenly beauty; it is still more so to trace the magical effect upon a family group, when the separate holy characteristics come out distinctly into light and pleasing variety, like the budding of a beautiful plant into its several delicate ramifications of tendrils, flowers, and leaves.

Willibald and Winibald both inherited the same deep resolve, and Saxon strength of purpose. But Willibald, together with a healthier constitution of body, seems to have possessed a more ready and active mind, more of eagerness and fire. Winibald, who was weakly, was more of a quiet contemplative hermit-like cast. Their sister, St. Walberga, who was probably much younger than either, shews a particular attachment to her sickly brother. The outline of her life exhibits the same great and princely heart, melted by feminine softness into a gentle patience, and sweet intensity of devotion.

From such children we could well argue the piety of the father, under whose fostering care such stately plants

<sup>7</sup> Goscelin, de Vit. Sanct. apud Bolland. in Vita S. Ricardi.

grew up to adorn Christ's earthly paradise. But a circumstance occurs to show the habitual holy temper and religious faith of King Richard. The child Willibald, when he was about three years old was seized with a violent disorder; the sickness was so severe, that his body fell under it into the last state of weakness, and his life was given over. At such times the difference between the worldly and the religious is this, the former look to natural means only for help, and when these fail, they have nothing to rely upon; the latter still depend upon the will of God in faith, and therefore have hope. In those simple times, (and the custom still remains in simple countries like the Tyrol,) a holy cross of sufficient size was planted in a public open spot, which was thus dedicated to acts of religious worship, sometimes by the wayside, sometimes adjoining the house of a rich proprietor, to which it was attached like a chapel, and used as a domestic place of prayer. To this the king and queen brought the child and laid him at its foot, a suffering infant beneath the emblem of suffering innocence. There they poured forth their earnest prayers and intercessions, vowing, as Hannah of old, that if the dying child was given back to them, his life should be devoted to the service of God. The prayer was heard, and the child restored. The staff of Elisha brought no help to the Shunammite's son in times of old, but the cross of the Lord is found of more avail to the faithful in Christ.

St. Richard received his child as a gift restored again from the grave, and held him to be no more his own, but a sacred trust put into his hands from heaven. Doubtless, such an event tended much to increase devotion and thankfulness in a mind and heart already devout. For two years more he kept his son, and then, by the



hand of a faithful servant, sent him at the age of five years old to be placed with the holy Abbot Egbald in the monastery of Waltham, not far from Winchester, where still there is a bishop's residence<sup>8</sup>. Thus he severed his son from himself and from the world, a painful act, which afterwards led on to another and greater sacrifice, in which consists the chief action in St. Richard's life. Self-denial ever leads the way to self-denial. It was in this school of discipline at Waltham that the young soldier of the cross learned the hard yet easy lesson, to follow the ensign of the Lamb whithersoever He goes. His bold and ready temper was nursed to high longings in the seclusion of his monastery, and he returned to his home at the age of twenty, to teach his father that high lesson to which that father had first led him on; he came to bid father and brother renounce their royal estate, country and home, to wander out into the world as poor pilgrims, after the example of Him who had no place where to lay his head. He broke his own resolution first in secret to St. Richard; and then, with all the animation of an ardent heart, the young saint urged his plea. Men of the world, of what is called common sense, would look upon such words as mere romancing. Probably such language would be listened to with utter scorn and derision, if not considered as absolute folly and distraction. Yet the foolishness of man may be heavenly wisdom, and humble men in faithful days did not so listen to it. His father hearkened to the enthusiast with meekness; at first indeed he took the ground on which high resolves are often put away, he urged his ties and duties at home; but after a while he found these considerations to be in his own case but a pretext, and at length he consented.

<sup>8</sup> Camden, Part ii. Hants.

Perhaps he had already formed some such desire, from weariness of the world and the examples of neighbouring kings. Perhaps political circumstances urged him the same way. It is supposed to have been for the peace of his people that he resigned his power. Winibald, who was nineteen years of age, and who had been brought up as it appears at home, showed the same ready compliance, and obeyed the call of his brother.

It was in the year 721, when they came to their determination; first they were to visit Rome, the centre of Christendom, where the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul were laid; afterwards to pass on to the yet more hallowed scene of the Saviour's life and sufferings, the Holy Land. In the spring of the year they made ready for their departure. It is probable that Queen Winna was dead, and there seems reason to think that St. Walberga, with other children, was a daughter by a second wife. He placed her in the convent at Winburne in Dorset<sup>9</sup>, the usual refuges in those days for the unprotected, and commonly the places of education for ladies of rank. There she found holy companions in the princesses Cuthberga and Queenberga, the sainted sisters of king Ina. Having placed his daughter in the secure arms of a careful mother, the Church, the noble Saxon, with his two sons, bidding farewell to earthly cares, took his way to Southampton, then called Hamle-mouth, to take ship, followed by such retainers as through love and fidelity chose to accompany their king.

It surely is a scene to awaken an indifferent world, and to give a solemn witness to the power of Christianity, to see a little band thus gather, and go forth from their kindred and people, henceforth belonging to no earthly

<sup>9</sup> See Camden, Brit. Dorset.

land, but seeking a heavenly. It can only be through an utter ignorance of the motives and deep constraining principles which lie within, that men look on with wondering scorn, or draw out the tongue, and shake the head in derision, as they pass on. Like haughty Egypt, they imagine that they are gone out to be swallowed in the sea, or to perish in the wilderness. But he whose religion is dearer to him than all the world beside, is free to go where he will; he is the true brave man, and all lands are his home. Places and things are everywhere much alike to him, and if he could, he would fain escape away. The world is unwilling that the prisoner should flee, and stretching out its arms into the void, would drag back perforce the departing footsteps. It seems to men, as if ruin were at hand, and the last of the angel guard were going out from among them.

Having hired a vessel, they embarked, followed by the tears and prayers of the friends who accompanied them to the shore. The passage of the sea is always a solemn thing, and then was counted perilous. The style of the simple ancient narrative rises as it comes to the tale of the voyage, and swells into long undulating tremulous words, as though the memory of its sensations had dwelt unforgotten on the mind. There is something, moreover, which touches the heart deeply in leaving an island home, but then our saints were not cruising abroad for pleasure or business as men do now; the calm religious mind which is fixed on eternity can watch even the receding shores of a dear home with a peaceful eye, like the spectator of a changing scene in some unsubstantial vision; it is not because it is insensible, but because it is tranquil.

They landed at a town then called Rotum, on the Seine (probably it is Rouen in Normandy), and having

first paid a solemn visit to the churches, there to offer thanks for their prosperous voyage, they took their journey across France without delay, proposing to pass the Alps before the winter began. The expression of pitching camp at landing, shows that the company of pilgrims was considerable in number, among whom, as it would seem, several young men of gentle birth, had joined them out of devotion and affection to the young princes. It appears they had to pass through some unconverted heathen country, probably on the Italian side of the Alps: for as they traversed France they diligently sought every church to pray for protection against the barbarians. Thus they enlisted as they went on the armies of heaven on their side; on the aid of which, and not on human prudence and precaution, they relied to keep them safe from their enemies. This quiet confidence throws a charm round the weak and defenceless; the furious passions of men are cowed; and though they gather like lions round a Daniel, they are held back from hurting them. Their progress was unmolested. On their way they heard that their kinsman St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, had begun his mission. People now would argue that they ought to have left their wandering, and have gone to be useful in that heathen country. But while reason calculates utilities, and the world approves its judgment, simple affection takes unconsciously a wiser and nobler course; they preferred to seem idle, rather than be busy about serving; so keeping their resolve, they passed on, seeking Him first, and the dear memorials and relics of His presence, for whose sake they had left all.

They arrived at Lucca, and the bishop received them with hospitality. In the days when Christendom was united, and before love had grown cold, the Church

everywhere received the wanderer with welcome. Poverty was a letter of commendation, and the name of Christian a passport through the length and breadth of Christendom. Charity opens the heart of man, and his eye is no longer jealous and suspicious, nor his hand against his fellow. The Church of Lucca had no reason to repent of her hospitality; she had unawares entertained a saintly guest, and he left with her in recompence his blessing, and bequeathed his remains. It was now the sickly autumn, and St. Richard fell ill. He was to be spared his pilgrimage; here it was to be cut short. He breathed his last happily in the arms of his children. They took his body, and wrapping it in a fair cloth, laid it to rest in the church of St. Frigidian, a holy man from Ireland, formerly bishop of Lucca.

Sorrowful and yet rejoicing, his sons journeyed on to Rome. St. Richard died in the autumn of the year 722. Several circumstantial accounts are related of cures at his tomb, and relief from satanic possession. To those who think little on the awful realities of the spiritual world, such narratives are difficulties. As they do not believe in the presence or power of the evil one in the soul of man, so consequently they cannot receive the history of its liberation from him. But to a thoughtful mind the moral miracles of Christianity are greater, and more marvellous than any external physical changes can be considered, or any bodily cures. In contemplating the lives of holy men under its influence, changes so wonderful are seen to take place in conduct and character, from what it was before, that no material change, no affection of colour, shape, or external form or habit, can adequately represent them. It seems as if the stroke of an enchanter's wand had changed the whole moral

scenery ; out of such meanness and hideousness arises such strength and such beauty. The lives of Christian saints are a standing miracle ; their gentleness, their meekness and supernatural endurance, are as contrary to the natural course of human wilfulness and wickedness, as the greatest deviations possible from the usual course of visible creation ; and even much more so, for of all changes that can be in the nature of things, the greatest that can be conceived is that of evil into good.

To those who have seen the sweetness of such behaviour in the living, and have been moved by its fragrance, it need be no wonder that even the frail vessel that once contained the spirit should savour of its life ; or that Satan should flee from the smell of the remembrance of its holiness, more quickly than he fled of old from the perfume of the fish's heart in the marriage chamber of pure-hearted Tobias. How dearly men in those days prized such possessions will be seen by what follows. Many years afterwards, the people of Aichstadt in Germany, which was Willibald's see, wished to add to the remains of the sons the body of the father. They sent to Lucca, offering any sum that it was in their power to raise, and adding entreaties, to be allowed to remove the relics of St. Richard. Neither prayers nor promises could prevail with the people of Lucca to part with what they considered greater than the greatest earthly treasure. At last, for charity's sake, the petitioners begged to be at least permitted to take away some portion of the dust from the tomb ; and when they but received some particles, they conveyed it home with joy as an invaluable gift. Such earnestness betokens a reality of reverence, and a sense of value at least, which ought to strike us now, who measure all things by gold.



Perhaps it may be objected, that such a regard is over fond, and ought to be condemned; but the objection comes with an ill grace from men, who fall into ecstasy over a bronze from Herculaneum, or a coin of Caligula, and will give a large sum for even a hair or a tooth of some oppressor of the Church, or the autograph of some condemned felon. If we must needs admire, it is better to prefer the beautiful to the strange or the hideous, for what we most admire that we imitate.

Some account must be added, of cures wrought at St. Richard's tomb, in proof of his sanctity and acceptance with God, and of the singular value of his bones to the people of Lucca.

Some centuries<sup>1</sup> after his death, on the removal of the remains of St. Frigidian, and other holy persons who lay in that church, the body of the stranger king was left through carelessness, or through lapse of time forgotten. A noble count of Lucca named Cedeus, who had lain a paralytic many years, deprived of all use of his limbs, saw a vision of the saint in the night, who bid him arise and go to the prior and brotherhood of St. Frigidian, and ask them why they had severed him from the companions with whom his bones had lain in sacred fellowship so many years. The sick nobleman replied, that his infirmity of many years made him incapable of obeying, and asked who he was that bade him go. The saint answered, that he was Richard the Saxon king, and told him, "go without fear, for that Christ our sweet Saviour had condescended to his prayer, and that from that very hour he was healed." The count

<sup>1</sup> A.D. 1151.

awoke in the morning cured ; and, besides this testimony to the reality of the vision, was enabled to declare the spot where the relics lay, which through antiquity had become unknown.

The fame of other miracles at his shrine reaching Germany, a poor paralytic caused himself to be brought as best he could from thence to Lucca, and in reward for his great faith, was restored to the use of his limbs. An attendant on the daily service at the altar, beneath which were the remains of St. Richard, lay in a hopeless state of suffering from a pulmonary disease. As he slept, a form with a majestic beard, and bright angelic countenance appeared to him, wearing a royal crown, and holding a sceptre, and bade him go for relief to the altar, at which he had so continually served in holy offices. He obeyed the vision and was cured.

A waiting maid in the house of a noble citizen of Lucca was possessed with devils, so that even the strongest man could not hold her, and she was a terror to all. At length the devils declared by her, unwillingly, that they were subjected to the power of St. Richard, and would come out of her if taken to the Church of St. Frigidian. With great difficulty she was taken there ; and upon approach to the holy place, she began to utter terrible cries, like the mingled sounds of many fierce wild animals, so hideous and horrible that people were terrified far and near. After awhile she ceased her screams, and was set free.

Sensual men, who have drunk of Circe's cup, and are themselves transformed out of humanity, or cold men of intellect who know nothing of moral degradation, do not believe in the fearful embodiments of evil, of which the world gives actual instances. They cannot apprehend

the high and holy words of Scripture, which speaks of such men as dogs and swine. They cannot believe that a legion of evil things, whose fit habitation was a herd of swine, can take their abiding place in the human heart, and fill it with all uncleanness. Yet Scripture says, that so it is ; and if only men would know themselves, they might see within themselves all that is horrible and wild in the animal creation. Men may live, and do live, each one of these hateful lives ; and as wickedness progresses they come out in their horrible shapes of character. The great evil world is full of such roaming in it to and fro ; and he who knows his own heart, knows that he might himself be such a one. But over these spiritual wickednesses in their different depths and heights, St. Paul tells us the Christian has won the victory. The saints' feet trample upon the neck of the monster sin ; and according as they have fought in the good fight, they are placed as heavenly guards over the fiendish enemies they have subdued. It is the world's wickedness which prevents this victory of faith from being realized. Principles of evil, when known as such, bring out the opposite principles of good, and the great moral combat assumes a distinct and visible shape. But when principles of evil are unknown, and this is always in proportion to the degree that men themselves are involved in them, the view of the great battle becomes obscured. Hence when the mist of their own vices and false principles covers mankind, the Evil Spirit with all his legions lies hid, and at the same time, Angels, Prophets, and Apostles, and all the noble army of Martyrs become invisible too ; friend and foe are alike unseen, and men care not to seek the aid of the one and dread no longer the devices of the other. It is only when the soul is lost—the city is

taken—ruin is at hand, and the towers are falling, that the horrible countenances become distinctly visible : then, when too late,

“ Apparent diræ facies, inimicaque Trojæ  
Numina.”

LIFE OF  
**St. Willibald,**

BISHOP OF AICHSTADT.—701—786.

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SAINT Willibald was born, as near as can be ascertained, in the year 701, of noble parents: Richard prince of Kent or Hampshire, and Saint, and, according to tradition, Winna sister of the great bishop Winfrid or Boniface. He had a brother and sister Winibald and Walberga, Winibald either a little older or younger, but probably one year younger, of the same father and mother; and Walberga considerably younger, being, it is thought, of another mother.

He was a sickly child, though he grew up a vigorous man. When an infant of three years old he was at the point of death, but was miraculously restored to health by the virtue of the cross, as is told more at length in the life of Richard his father. Out of gratitude to God his parents from that time devoted him to a religious life, although, as it seems, he was their heir. Accordingly, as soon as he was five years old, he was sent away from home to a monastery. The ceremonious attention to the child implied in the narrative, shows the noble condition and state of his father, even if it were not otherwise proved. A gentleman of the household, or perhaps a priest, for he is called the “venerable and faithful Theo-

dred," conveyed the little prince in a litter or carriage to the abbey of Waltham near Winchester, a convent of Benedictine monks, probably at some distance from his father's residence. The Abbot Egbald, a man of famed sanctity, came out to receive him at the head of his monks ; and, according to the courteous custom and rule, having asked the leave of the brotherhood, admitted the child among them to the order of St. Benedict. Not long before this time many houses in England were strictly reformed according to the rules of that order. There are those who seem disposed to think that Christianity is not meant for children ; but Scripture says otherwise, and men of wisdom did not think so anciently, but took that to be the fittest time for its reception, when the heart is simple and guileless, and not yet corrupted by the world. The convents often taught multitudes of saintly children, and hence came the modern mistake that many of them were at first mere places of scholastic education.

The child Willibald very early showed signs of wisdom and understanding, especially in the knowledge and repetition of the Psalms, so that it might truly be said of him, that with " an infant's mouth he sang the fulness of praise." His disposition was naturally eager and bold, and thus nourished among the high thoughts and heavenly themes of the great harper of the Church, he grew up full of ardent aspirations, and longings to do or endure some great thing, for the love he felt glowing within him. Left to himself, he would probably have been a headstrong impetuous man ; but tempered by religion, his disposition led him to a frank and ready surrender of himself, with a holy prompt activity. In his willingness to learn, strong devotion, and firm patience, he showed the same readiness, and even in the



manual labours enjoined by his rule, so that what he did, he did heartily. This happy temper drew to him the love of the abbot and his companions. At the same time he found himself regarded, not only as a simple monk, but as a king's son ; and as he grew towards manhood, he found this dangerous respect increasing. Perceiving this to be a snare, he was set upon finding a remedy. His own stirring mind, and the romance of the undertaking itself, and the common practice of the age, suggested a pilgrimage. This would remove him at once from his temptations, by separating him from the land in which he was known and honoured, and the greatness to which he was heir. The idea at length settled to a purpose, and when near the age of twenty he broke it to the abbot. Egibald was at first unwilling, but gave at length his consent ; and Willibald left the convent to persuade his father and brother not only to agree to it, but to accompany him to Palestine.

To our every day notions the very idea of a pilgrimage is so strange, and the proposal so wild, that something must be said by way of comment and explanation. Reasons must be given to show why it would not appear then what it appears now, puerile, or unscriptural, or dangerous, or useless. It is strange and new, and we do not see what it has to do with religion to go to the Holy Land. In those days it was the very reverse of this ; it was not new, but very usual, as much as it is with us to talk of going to church ; Christians had made pilgrimages, time out of mind ; their fathers had done so, martyrs and saints had done so. No one thought it more strange to go to holy places at a distance, than we should to a church a long way off, or in the rain. Moreover there is reason for saying that such had been the custom from very early times. Theodorus Studites, a

grave writer of the 9th century says, that the Holy Land was so regarded that even a pebble of it was honoured<sup>1</sup>. Near a century before the time of which the present history speaks, "multitudes out of all nations," says Adamnanus, "met at Jerusalem<sup>2</sup>." St. Augustine speaks of Tribunitius having a little earth of the Holy Land by his bedside as a treasure, brought by a friend<sup>3</sup>. Earlier still St. Jerome, who himself was a dweller in the Holy Land<sup>4</sup>, speaks of being interrupted in his writing by the crowds of 'hospites,' or pilgrims he had to entertain. Itineraries<sup>5</sup> were composed as early as 333, from the routes of former travellers, and for the benefit of future ones. With the visit and searches of St. Helena, mother of Constantine, most are familiar<sup>6</sup>. Two visits of bishops of Cappadocia are recorded<sup>7</sup>, Firmilian and Alexander, the last to fulfil a vow; Origen says, that sacred spots were shown<sup>8</sup>; and to complete the whole, the very fact that heathen images were placed to desecrate the places of our Lord's memorials, and that Hadrian walled in Calvary, shows that before that time they were consecrated and resorted to by Christians.

There is then more than enough to show that such a thing was then no novelty. And this itself goes far to prove the next point, that it was a natural growth of religion, not a thing inserted or forced into it, because from

<sup>1</sup> Theodor. in dogm. de imag. apud Gretser. lib. i. c. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Adamn. de Locis Sanctis.

<sup>3</sup> S. Aug. lib. xxii. De Civ. Dei, c. 8.

<sup>4</sup> S. Hieron. Præf. I. 7. in Ezek.

<sup>5</sup> Itinerarium Burdigalense.

<sup>6</sup> Euseb. τὴν ἀξιάγαστον ἀνιστορήσουσα γῆν.

<sup>7</sup> See Gretserus de S. Peregr. lib. i. c. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Orig. lib. i. cont. Celsum, δείκνυται τὸ σπήλαιον.

the first centuries it had been a habit with Christian people. An habitual product of any plant or tree is called its fruit, and this may be called a fruit of Christianity, not that it must necessarily ensue from it as an obligation, but may be a natural growth of the feelings it inspires.

The idea of "leaving the world," if taken in a literal sense may easily develope into such an habitual view. Abraham left home and kindred to sojourn, or to be a pilgrim; the patriarchs were pilgrims. Our Lord left His heavenly home, and afterwards His home on earth, to be a pilgrim in the Holy Land. The Anglo-Saxons, a simple race and very devout, accepted the literal command. No country ever sent forth greater crowds of wanderers or more illustrious<sup>9</sup>. Some came down from a throne, or left newly-made conquests in Britain. Some went out to teach the ignorant or to convert the heathen, and some to find a home in the desert and cave of the anchorite.

There may have been particular reasons for persuading St. Richard to listen to his son. His hereditary kingdom had been much disturbed by incursions, and his father slain in battle, and thus it would be for the peace of his people that he should leave them. Accordingly, the arguments of Willibald prevailed, and not only with him, but his brother Winibald, and a number of other noble young Saxons, probably their intimates, seven of whom afterwards accompanied Willibald to Palestine. His power of attaching and influencing others appears to have been great, as is usually the case with decided characters.

The history of their departure and travel to Lucca,

<sup>9</sup> Gretserus de Sacr. Per. lib. ii. c. 12.

where the father died, is told in the life of St. Richard. When the two brothers had laid the remains of their father in repose, they passed on in their toilsome way. It was the autumn of the year 721. If we could gain some insight into the numbers, resources, or costume of the company, it would be very interesting, but there is little in the narrative to give information. They are spoken of as a little camp, which implies a considerable number. The number of about<sup>1</sup> thirty was not unusual, or more together; in after times nobles of France went with what might be called armies; but there seems no reason to think that the company described was very large in number, or provided with means otherwise than in the simplest way, or in any way armed against attack. The whole summer had been consumed in traversing the plains of France, in crossing the Alps and Apennines, and descending to Lucca in Italy; so that it is probable from their slow progress that they went solely on foot. Hitherto, they had been unmolested; but now there was danger to be apprehended in their route. The Lombards were at that period disturbing Italy, and they heard that there were soldiers in the passes; but they escaped them, and went safely through Tuscany<sup>2</sup>.

“Dear is the stranger to heaven,” are the words of Homer; even heathens of old honoured the wanderer; and in Christian times their persons were rendered secure by the veneration in which they were held<sup>3</sup>. We read even of robbers returning money to those they had spoiled, when they knew they were pilgrims. Enactments were made to free them from tolls, and duties upon

<sup>1</sup> Fosbroke, *Pilgrim*. c. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Baronius, *Ecel. Ann.* Gibbon, *Ch.* xlix.

<sup>3</sup> Fosbroke on *Pilgrim*. c. vi.

their baggage<sup>4</sup>, which was usually carried in rush baskets or “*scripea*,” from whence the “*pilgrim’s scrip*.” Many assistances were provided for them by charity ; especially hospitals built for their reception at Rome, and Jerusalem, and elsewhere. So that even very poor people, and without resources, might venture to undertake a pilgrimage. But the severity of the vows they often took upon them rendered many such assistances needless<sup>5</sup> : since some bound themselves never to sleep in a bed, some to lodge upon the bare ground, some to fast as they went, as Marana and Cyra, who for twenty days’ journey fasted going, and twenty days coming back, some to keep silence all the way<sup>6</sup>.

At length, in November, about St. Martin’s day, they entered Rome ; a resting place, after tossing by sea, and climbing mountains and traversing the long plains of France and Italy in pain and fear. At that time Rome and the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, drew multitudes of pilgrims from England, and all other parts<sup>7</sup>. There are lists of kings and nobles who came, besides the common people. It was usual for them to hasten as soon as they arrived to the church of St. Peter, and pay their devotions there. This act, says Baronius, was the same as “*signifying their communion with the Church Catholic*”<sup>8</sup>. The ancient building, part of which still remains, as a crypt under Michael Angelo’s wonderful pile, was one of the seven basilicas of Constantine, and even then was such a temple as became the honour of the prince of Apostles. If we consider well the majesty of St. Peter’s chair, before which, for hundreds of years, saints and kings, bishops, martyrs, confessors, in long and

<sup>4</sup> Fosbroke, c. v.      <sup>5</sup> Gretserus, lib. i. c. 4. ex Theodoreto.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. e Surio.      <sup>7</sup> See Gretser. lib. ii. ch. 13, 14.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. ch. 10. Gretserus e Baronio.

solemn train, and all the hearts of Christendom bowed, we may conceive in a degree the loyal gladness, with which faithful men used to come to tender their submission to authority, and pay reverence to the Keeper of the Keys.

The wanderers were received into a hospice, or monastery provided for pilgrims, and through the ensuing winter and spring, Willibald and Winibald spent their time in holy exercises and severe discipline, until, as the old narrative expresses it, the "joyous time of Easter spread a glad sunshine through all the world." Then people knew how to rejoice, because they knew how to sorrow. Easter past, and summer came on, the dangerous time for strangers newly come from a northern clime. Both were seized with the malaria fever. Fits of shivering, and burning fever, succeeded one another with such violence that life was endangered. The sickness fell upon them alternately, one took to his bed as the other rose, and they waited upon one another week by week in turn. Here was an example of the simplicity and affection of the saintly brothers; and austerity also, for they continued their monastic rule, and holy exercise, even through their sickness, with their usual unsubdued energy and determination of character.

Whether it was this severe illness that broke Winibald's constitution, already delicate, and so made him incapable of the toil of a pilgrimage to the distant shores of Palestine, is not said; perhaps, captivated with the calm and seclusion of monastic life, he gave himself up to the quiet and retirement which suited his serious cast of mind and sickly body. The high-tempered Willibald was eager for fresh toil. Accordingly, when the following winter was past, he called together his countrymen and fellow-pilgrims, and said that "with their leave and consent, and the aid of their prayers, he purposed now



to journey on to the Holy Land, and, if so great mercy were granted him, to see the city Jerusalem. Seven out of his companions were willing to accompany him; two are mentioned as near friends, one of whom is called by name Diapert.

They waited until the solemnities of Easter were over, and then set forth. It is pleasing to observe how, through all their travel, sacred seasons measure the pauses, as if to a Christian time were no more, but the eternal round of joy and sweet sorrow<sup>9</sup>, like the circling of the stars round the pole, had already begun, and days and years were only known, and space observed, by the memorials of Christ's pain and triumph, with the saints who have suffered for His sake. Localities seem to serve the same purpose, as if the whole world were become a book telling of the same story, each spot with its associations bearing witness to Christianity, and repeating the triumph of the Cross from land to land. This will serve in a measure to explain the thoughts and feelings with which men in ancient days entered upon a travel to visit holy scenes. They went with a single heart, and single eye. Totally different minds see, so to speak, different worlds, because they make totally different observations. The whole mass of facts that the one gathers, passes from the other unnoticed, and so it is no wonder that the inductions they make, and the conclusions they come to, differ so widely. According as men are themselves, so they take their views. And thus it is in the travels of a saint, the world seems changed, as in a magical illusion, and all things take a religious hue, because he looks out upon them from his own mind. This gives

<sup>9</sup> ἐπὶ πᾶσι καὶ χαρὰ καὶ πένθος κυκλοῦσιν,  
οἷον Ἄρκτου τροφάδες κέλευθοι.—Soph. Trach.



value to the following details of the narrative of his pilgrimage, uninteresting perhaps to the curious or scientific reader, which was written down from the saint's own mouth by the authoress, who was either St. Walburga, his sister, or one of her religious sisterhood in the convent of Heidelberg.

The eight companions set out from Rome after Easter 723, taking the route to Terracina ; there they stayed two days, and from thence, passing along the shore to Gaieta, they took a boat across the bay to Naples. " Divine mercy," says the narrative, " ever deals so kindly with those that wait upon it, that it fulfils their very wishes ; for at Naples they found a ship of Egypt, which in two weeks set sail taking them on board, and touching for two days at Reggio in Calabria, carried them from thence to Catana in the Isle of Sicily—there rests in peace the body of the holy virgin Agatha." After a delay of three weeks at Catana, while the ship was probably engaged in trading, they made across the Adriatic to some place on the eastern coast, called in the tale, " Manasasia of the Sclavonian land," and afterwards leaving Corinth on the left and touching at Coos and then at Samos, they disembarked at Ephesus.

It would be curious, if it could be ascertained whether this was the usual route to Palestine or not ; or to sail direct to Acre, or to Grand Cairo in Egypt. The latter was a common way of access<sup>1</sup>, as was probably owing to the number of ships of Alexandria trading to different parts of the Mediterranean ; and Acre was a great sea-port. Again, there was probably a line from Constantinople along the coast of Asia Minor, which would take Ephesus in its way. Perhaps this was the

<sup>1</sup> Itinerar. Sym. Simeonis.

earliest and then most frequented line, especially for people of the Greek Church, though the least direct for St. Willibald and his companions. Into this it seems they fell, guided, as they must have been, by the destination of the trading vessel which took them on board<sup>2</sup>. It was usual to embark, as they did, from Sicily, or sometimes at Marseilles.

Ship-masters sometimes took pilgrims on board for charity, who, as anchor was weighed, sang hymns and prayed for a safe voyage; but more often as freight for profit. Regulations were made to secure them a fair treatment, and the ship-masters were made to take oaths to fulfil their engagements to them<sup>3</sup>. It was usual to bring money to pay for the voyage, raised from the sale of their worldly effects; but sometimes this was spent in port before a vessel arrived to take them. It seems that the noble Saxon wanderers had money with them to pay the passage.

After their landing at Ephesus, remembrances come crowding thickly. They are in the scene of the early romance of Christianity, when it first broke forth into the beautiful regions of Asia in miraculous power, and scattered freely upon earth the gifts and wonders of heaven; but as they draw near the chief scene of Gospel story, the feeling of simple wonder deepens into solemn and awful melancholy, while they follow the footsteps of the Saviour through the Holy Land to the awful consummation at Jerusalem; and joy is absorbed into majestic sorrow.

Their first steps on resuming now their pilgrimage by land were engaged in visiting the wonders of Ephesus. There they were shown the Cave of the Seven Sleepers,

<sup>2</sup> Fosbroke, c. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Fosbroke, *ibid*.

in which it was then confidently believed that seven bodies of saints had lain, and having slept a vast number of years, rose again, and entered the city to confute a deadly heresy into which the Church of Ephesus had fallen. The tale was admitted not only by Christians, but even the followers of Mahomet<sup>4</sup>. Now it would be hard to find faith on earth though one rose from the dead. From the cave they came to the church of St. John, passing, as it were, with natural transition of thought from the warning voice of the dead to him who forewarned the Ephesian Church, the aged and solitary seer of the Apocalypse. As they departed from Ephesus they came to a large village on the sea-side, called in the narrative "Figila," where, says the story, "they sat down by a fountain in the middle of it, and having asked for some bread, (if they had money, it probably would not be current there,) dipped it in the water and made a meal."

The mention of this little incident suggests much thought. In these days of self-indulgence, or at least of sickness, it is hardly known how little the human frame in its true health requires for support. What these austere wanderers would count enough, would seem to us incredible privation. This will account for the easiness with which they seem to find subsistence; such little as they wanted could be easily obtained wherever they found Christian people, and in simple times and countries the mere necessities of life are counted in a manner free and common to all, and the wayfarer meets with a ready hospitality; a suspicious overwrought civilization denies the piece of bread and cup of water to the beggar.

<sup>4</sup> For the evidence, see Gibbon.

However, abstinent as they were, they could not escape casualties ; thus, passing along the coast, after crossing the Lycian mountains, and wintering at Patara, in the spring they sailed over to some point on the Cilician or Pamphylian coast, where the country, it seems, had been desolated. One account speaks of a flood which had visited it, another of the desolations of war, and the poor pilgrims were reduced to the last extremity, so that they were like to have died ; but, as is piously said, “ God gave them food :” how, we are not told, but a religious mind sees in what are called common occurrences (as the ship ready for them at Naples,) miraculous provisions of a protecting Providence. From thence they sailed to Paphos in the isle of Cyprus, and there spent the festival of Easter, completing the first year of their travel.

Leaving Paphos after Easter, they came to Constantia, famous for the tomb and remains of the holy Bishop Epiphanius, whose festival is the twelfth of May, about the time they came, and there they stayed until St. John Baptist’s day. Hitherto they have been in the Greek dominions and amongst Christians ; but now they sailed from Cyprus, and landing at Aradus on the Phœnician coast, they entered the land of the Saracens.

It was now near a century since the followers of Mahomet had taken possession of Jerusalem<sup>5</sup>. As yet they had not any bitter animosity against Christians ; “ and just at this time,” says the narrative, “ there was great peace between the Greeks and Saracens.” The Christians dwelling in the Holy Land were suffered to live for the most part peaceably in the exercise of their religion. Agreements were even made at times between

<sup>5</sup> Milman, *Hist. Jews*, b. xxii.

the sultan of Egypt and the emperor of Constantinople, to allow and protect pilgrims from insult and harm, and special orders to that effect were issued to the emirs; monasteries and churches were secured from violence, and even repaired <sup>6</sup>."

Yet still, in those days of keen perception, it cost a Christian a shudder, to pass into the land of what they would have called "Mahometan swine <sup>7</sup>." People now have no objection to the company of unbaptized heathens. Besides, the Saracens favoured and allowed the Jews, and even trusted them with the office of exacting the fines and imposts laid upon Christian travellers <sup>8</sup>. The Jewish population of the country, especially in Samaria, bore such a hatred to pilgrims, and held them in such abomination, that we read even of their burning straw upon their footsteps after them, to purify the ground. Sometimes the Saracens imprisoned them to exact these fines <sup>9</sup>.

Proceeding inland from the city Aradus, they came to a "castellum" or fortified town of the same name, "in which," the narrative says, "they found a bishop of the Greek nation, with whom they had the Litany, (or office) according to the custom of the Greek Church;" the word includes the service of the altar as well as prayers. The fact is one of much interest, as showing the unity of heart then in Christendom, and that a difference in service does not necessarily imply, though it may form an occasion of heresy. It was not long after this that intercommunion between the Western and

<sup>6</sup> See, as quoted by Gretser. lib. i. c. viii., Hist. Joan. Cantacuzen. iv. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Itin. Sym. Simeonis.

<sup>8</sup> Milman, vol. iii. p. 270.

<sup>9</sup> Itin. Antonin. Placent. in Acta Sanc. t. ii. Maii. Bernhardi Monachi Itiner. in Mabillon.

Eastern Churches ceased, the Greeks becoming Iconoclasts. Twelve miles from thence they came to the city Edessa, so famous for its King Abgarus, and early reception of the faith by the preaching of St. Thomas. There they found a spacious church built by the empress Helena, and dedicated to St. John the Baptist, whose relics it contained.

Edessa was the residence of an emir<sup>1</sup>, it may be of the khalif himself; he is called, in the rude Latin of the story,—“Mirmumnus,” a corruption from “Emir-al-Mumanin,” or “Commander of the Faithful.” Hesham son of Abd-al-Malek was khalif at that time, of the race of the Ommyyades; he succeeded his brother Yerid January 26, 724, and died 743. Judæa and Syria were governed by emirs; the khalif usually residing at Damascus, or Grand Cairo. The government was apparently equitable and mild.

The foreign dress and striking appearance of the eight Saxons, now excited attention. It is not likely that at that early period any particular costume was adopted by all pilgrims, but they probably came in their national habits. This, however, in the Saxon, would be very similar to what became the usual pilgrim's garb in succeeding times. “The Anglo-Saxons,” says Fosbroke, “had scrips, (or rush baskets,) and they were worn slung at the side<sup>2</sup>.” The simple frock or tunic, let loose, or girt in the middle, was the chief article of dress; sometimes of leather, as Gurth the swineherd in *Ivanhoe*. The scallop shell, taken to serve all purposes, of cup, dish, and spoon, and attached to the flap of the wide-brimmed shadowing hat, was a convenience

<sup>1</sup> Government of the Holy Land.

<sup>2</sup> Fosbroke, *Costumes of Pilgrims*.

so natural and obvious, that it was probably already adopted.

Found to be strangers from a far distant land, they excited curiosity, and either real or pretended suspicion of some unknown design; they were seized and put in prison, and being brought before an officer of justice, a rich old emir, they were charged, with the simplicity of the day, "with being *spies*." St. Willibald explained, as well as imperfect knowledge of the language allowed, from what country they came, and the religious nature of their visit. The old emir answered kindly and would have let them go, but it seems that a permission, perhaps a "Tezkirah" or passport from the khalif was required; thus they lay in prison until their cause should be heard, and this be obtained. Here a modern tale would be full of lamentation at such a hardship and mishap, but men in ancient days were full of a gentle composure, which accompanied them to prison and to death. From captive saints earthly chains fall off as with an angel-touch, and the world that injured them comes bowing down at last, to petition to wash their wounds, and ease the pressure of their bonds.

They were content to be in prison, since it so befel them, and were thankful to God for the many indulgences and kind treatment they met with. A merchant of the city, a Christian probably, "was moved with compassion for them; out of charity to them, and for the welfare of his soul, he offered a sum of money to redeem them, but it was refused: he then sent them daily, morning and evening, food; every fourth day, and last day of the week, he sent his own son to lead them out to a bath" (almost a necessary in that climate), "and attend them back to prison. On the Lord's day, he obtained leave for them to come to a Christian



church ; and made little purchases of such things as pleased them, as they passed through the mart. The people of the city stared at them with much curiosity, because they were young men of such fair appearance, and singular dress."

After some time had elapsed, a Spaniard chanced to come among the number of those who from curiosity or compassion visited them in prison, and having inquired their story, was interested with it. He was probably, also, a Christian merchant; but he had influence through his brother, who was an officer in waiting in the court of the khalif, and so obtained leave for them of an audience. The old emir attended, and the sailor who had conveyed them from Cyprus gave evidence to the story; and the khalif having heard their narrative, and that they came from the distant west land, where the sun sinks into sea, beyond which are only waters, exclaimed, "Wherefore should we treat the men roughly? they have done no wrong against us. Give them freedom and let them go." They were accordingly set free; the usual prison fine was forgiven them, and they received a full permission, probably a Tezkirah, or written passport, to travel in the country where they pleased.

This important point being gained, they passed on from Edessa to Damascus, a journey of nearly a hundred miles; the country they traversed contained so many Christians, that it was divided into twelve episcopal sees of the Greek Church. At Damascus they stayed a week; "there sleeps the body of the holy Ananias." Two miles out of the city, on the road towards Jerusalem, the spot was pointed out of the manifestation of our Lord to St. Paul. Here a church was built, into which they entered and prayed; and

entering thus by the Church of the Conversion, a fit admission to the Holy Land, and praying as they went, they took their way into Galilee.

Continuing devout in prayer, they followed the road to Nazareth, under the borders of Lebanon, and among the hills and valleys of the land of Nephthalim; making a joyous approach, in a meet frame of mind, to the home of the Saviour's childhood. The country about Nazareth is rich and fertile to this day. The city is built on a hill, overlooking the great vale of Esdraelon; arms of this extensive plain, through which the river Kishon flows, run amongst the neighbouring hills of Little Hermon and Tabor, and the ranges of Nazareth, watered by little streams and fountains. "The soil of this plain," says a late traveller, speaking of the valley which runs up towards Nazareth, "and also of the gradual northern slope, is exceedingly fertile, and the fields in many parts were still covered with a rich crop of wheat, ready and waiting for the sickle<sup>3</sup>." The vale runs under the Mount of Precipitation (from which the men of the city intended to throw our Lord down), and swells out into a basin under the ridges of Nazareth. In the time of St. Willibald, tradition showed the spot where the Annunciation was made to Mary, as she returned from drawing water at the Fountain of the Virgin<sup>4</sup>. The church, dedicated to the Archangel Gabriel, was built over the very source. "That church," says the narrative, "has often been redeemed for a sum of money from the violence of the neighbouring populace, who have desired to destroy it;" as though

<sup>3</sup> For fertility of the Holy Land, see Dr. Robinson, *Bibl. Researches*, vol. iii. sect. xiv. p. 168.

<sup>4</sup> Phocas. ap. Bolland. Maii, tom. ii. sec. x.

heathen hate were ever hemming in, and pressing hard, in fiendish malice, upon Christian love. It is interesting, if not more than that, to learn, that after a lapse of eleven hundred years, the fountain still flows with a feeble stream, and a church stands over its source<sup>5</sup>.

Here, having commended themselves to the Saviour's care, they walked on to Cana of Galilee, where our Lord, at the marriage-feast, made the water wine. Cana stands upon a ridge, connected with the range of Nazareth, with a broad, beautiful, and fertile plain, extending to the south. A large church was then there, in which stood six water jars composing the altar. These contained wine, and it was customary for pilgrims to communicate from this wine, thus commemorating the first beginning of the miracles of our Lord, and perpetuating it in a mystery as profound, the Church's everlasting miracle. Thus they pursued the theme of joy, begun with the glorious angelic salutation of Mary, drinking with gladness the new wine of the heavenly kingdom, and from thence, having stayed a day, they descended into the plain of Thabor, wandering on, as in a dream, to the Mount of the Transfiguration. Here they ascended, and found three monastic houses, one dedicated to the Apostles, Peter and James and John, one to Moses, and the other to Elias<sup>6</sup>. The mount itself is called 'Agemons,' or Holy Mount, and is a beautiful conical, or rather a semicircular hill, commanding from the platform on the top a fair view of the adjacent country<sup>7</sup>. It is still thus described: "It rose for the first time upon our view, a fine round mountain, presenting (from the S.W. side) the appearance of the

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Robinson, *Bibl. Researches*, vol. iii. sect. xiv. p. 188.

<sup>6</sup> See *Adricomii Terra Sancta*, page 143.

<sup>7</sup> *Phocas. Bolland. Maii*, tom. ii. sec. xi.

segment of a sphere ; sprinkled with old oaks to its very summit, and realizing in its graceful form and beauty, all that I had been led to anticipate respecting it<sup>8</sup> ;” seen from the N.W. the form inclines more to a truncated cone. “The view,” says the same traveller, “from Thabor is very extensive and beautiful<sup>9</sup>.” To the west the heights of Carmel are visible, and a glimpse of the Mediterranean ; to the north, beyond the plain which sweeps round the foot of Thabor from the vale of Esdraelon, rise the mountains of Safed, overtopped by the snow-capped heads of Lebanon ; below, towards the east and southwards, the whole outline of the basin of the lake of Tiberias can be traced, though only a small spot of the lake itself is visible, and the valley of the Jordan is seen, winding away towards the distant vale, in which slumber the waters of the Dead Sea.

Here then, most solemn thought, the Lord looked forth upon the beautiful land, which He of old Himself had in wisdom framed. Here He was wrapt in ecstasy.

Doubtless, deep and devout were the meditations of the saint, as he stood with his companions on this favoured hill ; nor would the charm be broken, as continuing in prayer they descended from it, and went down to the shore of that sea, on which the Lord walked, and bid Peter come to Him on the waters. A sublime and wonderful thought, exceeding all that the wildest romance ever dreamed of in fairy-land ! Man, through *faith*, became what he fain would be by *power*, the master of the elements, and only through want of faith being capable of being harmed by them. Man now,

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Robinson, sect. xiv. p. 180.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.* p.

like a great magician, by a mighty struggle gains the mastery. Every step costs a sacrifice; every advance some heart-string is snapped asunder; but what will not man give for the pride of power<sup>1</sup>? Meanwhile, field after field of matter is subdued by intellect, which onward goes like a vast engine on the move, crushing and controlling all things at its will. The elemental essences of the material world, one by one, obey the master's command; they labour for him to save him pain and toil; they succour him in sickness, and bid him defy disease; they transport him to and fro at pleasure upon the earth and through the air; they teach him dark and mysterious things, even the secrets of minds and hearts, and how to influence them; until the miserable creature of clay, by these his arts apes God upon the earth, and impiously imitates the Almighty greatness: yet simple faith can do more marvellous things than art and science in their fullest strength and pride. Faith has her own wings to fly with over the waters, and to traverse space; faith does not fear torment, and can keep unharmed from the power of elements; faith can teach greater mysteries, for it works through Him from whom the elements themselves come forth, and from whom all knowledge springs.

They entered Tiberias; in the early times of Christianity a city of great note, adorned with a multitude of churches, and having a bishop's chair. In the days of Herod it was the capital of Galilee, and was his favourite residence<sup>2</sup>. After the destruction of Jerusalem it became the chief refuge of the Jews, and Josephus speaks of a vast 'proseucha' there, or place of

<sup>1</sup> Curse of Kehama, Southey.

<sup>2</sup> Milman, Hist. Jews, vol. iii. p. 238. (Fam. Libr.)

prayer<sup>3</sup>. Even now, great ruins lie around it; vestiges of foundations and columns of granite are scattered along the shore<sup>4</sup>. In the time of St. Willibald the same features are described; they found, says the narrative, “many churches and a great synagogue;” and though much of the population was Jewish, “the festival of the Lord’s day was kept in the city with much honour and observance.” There they stayed several days, and afterwards proceeded along the shore of the sea of Galilee to Magdala. The waters of the lake of Tiberias are very limpid and clear; they lie sleeping in a deep hollow basin, “from which,” says the traveller already quoted, “the shores rise steeply for the most part, and continuously all around, except where a ravine, or sometimes a ‘wady’ or valley, interrupts them at intervals<sup>5</sup>.” The surrounding hills are rounded, and little marked in their outline; and rhododendrons are said to bloom upon them<sup>6</sup>. Magdala was then called the birth-place of Lazarus and his sisters; a curious confirmation by tradition then, of the arguments which have been held to prove that St. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha, are the same person<sup>7</sup>. From Magdala, they came through Bethsaida to Capernaum. Their pilgrimage lay along the sea-strand, where, as was pointed out by tradition, the Lord, after He was risen, appeared to His disciples as they were fishing, the closing scene of the Gospel of St. John; one of those touching, and awfully sublime visits which, like the wandering wind, coming and going—with them

<sup>3</sup> Joseph. Vita, B. J. ii. 20. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. iii. sect. xv. p. 256.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> V. S. Willibaldi, ex auctore perantiquo, apud Bolland.

<sup>7</sup> Williams on the Passion, p. 406.

and yet again away,—the Lord made to the twelve ere He ascended, as if to accustom them little by little to His absence; when He made the mystic meal with them upon the shore, and talked to them of things which were to come. A lonely walk by the side of beautiful waters, thus hallowed by His appearance there, well befitted a train of such wild and wondrous thought.

At Capernaum, which lies situate on the northern extremity of the lake, St. Peter's house was shown, where Christ raised with His touch Peter's wife's mother from a fever. From Capernaum they came to Bethsaida close by, where a church stood over the home of St. Andrew and Peter. From thence they passed round the head of the lake to Chorazaim, or Chorazim, on the eastern side of the sea of Galilee, and looking down along the shore they viewed the steeps of Gergasa, where over the precipices the herd of three thousand swine rushed headlong into the waters below<sup>8</sup>. A single human heart could give room for an army; a "legion" of the host of Satan found pleasure there, and exercise of their devilish will. All that headlong blindness, that perverse obstinacy and waywardness, that sufficed to hurry such a multitude of creatures to their own destruction, and choke them in the sea, had been concentrated in one man. Such is the abyss of the heart, with its dark unfathomable profound of evil, in which a hiding-place, and haunts of revelry can be given to foul spirits innumerable, and into which they will gather like night birds, clustering in a cave, or crows and vultures flocking to a carrion carcase<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Itin. Ant. Mart. in Reland. Palestine, p. 682, et ex Arculfo.

<sup>9</sup> "Corvorum exercitus ingens."—Virgil.



Following upwards the course of the Jordan, from the northern shore of the lake of Tiberias, they came to the sources of that mystic river—the river of Death. The two fountain heads from which it springs rise beneath the roots of Lebanon, and join their waters at Cæsarea Philippi, the ancient Dan. They are called in the narrative, as in other ancient itineraries, Yor and Dan<sup>1</sup>; when mingled, at once a river of life and a river of death; of death, into which our Lord at His baptism descended, and of life henceforth, when purified through Him as a healing baptismal stream.

Here, between these sacred sources, among the mountains of Lebanon they were lodged and entertained by the shepherds of the country, with whom they passed a night, and who gave them to drink sour buttermilk or whey. “There,” continues the simply told story, “are cattle, marvellous to behold, for the length of their backs, the shortness of their legs, and the mighty growth of their horns; they are all of one colour, and that a deep red<sup>2</sup>. There are pools of great size there, into which they go down in the heat of summer, and bathe all their body, with nothing to be seen but their heads above water.” The pools spoken of are probably the marshes of the “waters of Merom,” the first lake which the Jordan forms. A great philosopher observes<sup>3</sup>, that it is a characteristic of a right and happy mind, to be open to all the little satisfactions of life; and this is especially true of observation of little beauties, or curious things in nature. Children are full of such observation, which is a proof of what he remarks. Thus it seems, as if the minds of the saintly wanderers

<sup>1</sup> See Adrichomii Terra Sanct. page 109.    <sup>2</sup> Coloris “ostrei.”

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Butler’s Sermons, Sermon xi.

dwelt naturally, and with much meaning on the coloured cattle going down to bathe. They had been through a succession of excited, and almost ecstatic feeling, and their happiness and tenderness seeks to express itself in a refreshing pastoral scene. The deep and mysterious parts of Scripture ever seem to seek the same images, because words cannot tell high feelings, and darkly veiled semblances best convey solemn and sweet thoughts, which may be understood, but cannot be expressed.

Leaving the pleasant land of Zabulon and Naphtali, and the lake and mountains where the Lord loved to be during His earlier life and ministry, they descended, following the course of the Jordan, towards the more awful and melancholy scenery of the Holy Land, where that river flows down into the gloomy sea, which rolls its dead waters over the old valley of Siddim. The character of the region around the Dead Sea is in the highest degree stern and impressive. "It lies," says the modern traveller, "in its deep caldron, surrounded by lofty cliffs of naked limestone rock, exposed for eight months to the unclouded beams of a burning sun<sup>4</sup>." Towards this scene the travellers now descend. The transition is not unreal or strange; pain and pleasure, suffering and happiness, are deeply connected, and in the nature of things melancholy is intertwined with joy. Their passage down the vale of the Jordan is not described, and the river is little known, for few travellers have explored its course. Not far from its entrance into the lake of Death, the place of our Saviour's baptism is pointed out. The night before they visited it, they spent at the monastery of St. John

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. ii. sect. x.

the Baptist, about a mile from the spot. There lived a society of twenty monks, whose lonely and sad retreat made a fit preparation for the thoughts, and represented well the austere character of the dweller in the wilderness—the preacher of repentance; with them the wanderer might prepare himself by penitence and meditation, before he followed in the footsteps of the Lord, and entering the river of Death, sought to be baptized with His baptism. On the morrow St. Willibald went down, and plunged in the holy stream. The feeling is always a solemn one when the waters close over the head, shutting out the world, and filling the senses with their heavy weight and sound; but it must awake deeper awe to descend into them, where the Lord descended, taking from them the reproach of the deluge, and foreshowing His yet more fearful descent into the profound of hell. The Jordan near St. John's is a swift stream of whitish coloured clayey water, between five and six feet deep, and the channel in one part narrows to fifty feet wide<sup>5</sup>. In St. Willibald's time, a church stood on pillars in the stream, and a rope was stretched across the river, and fixed on either side, by which, on the day of the Epiphany, sick and impotent people held and bathed, and obtained miraculous cures.

From the river and ford of Jordan, the place where the children of Israel crossed (as Scripture says, “over against Jericho”), St. Willibald and his companions went up to Gilgal. Here lay twelve stones, in memory of that passage, and in figure of the twelve stones which the Lord chose, and laid for the foundation of His Church, when after ascending from the water He chose the twelve Apostles. Seven miles from Jordan they

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. ii. sect. x. p. 261.

came to Jericho, lying in a vast, and for the most part desert plain, once "the city of Palms." There they visited the fountain of Elisha, which bursts forth from the foot of the mountain Quarentana, on which the Lord fasted forty days<sup>6</sup>. "Whatever that fountain waters," says St. Willibald, "grows healthily, and flourishes, because of the blessing of the Prophet Elisha." The modern traveller bears the same witness; "The fountain pours forth a large stream of sweet and pleasant water, which is scattered in rivulets over a wide extent. By these abundant waters fertility and verdure are spread over the plain. Where the water does not flow the plain produces nothing<sup>7</sup>." The miracle, therefore, still remains; it is the well of life in an accursed land.

The ascent from Jericho to Jerusalem continues the solemn train of melancholy thought. It is the city of the curse of old, which clings to it still. Its sons were wicked mockers. Thieves infested its roads<sup>8</sup>. Elisha was jeered by children as he went up thence to Bethel; and to complete the mystery, it was there, in the way going up to Jerusalem, that the Lord "went before the disciples, and as they followed they were afraid." There was something about His look and demeanour so very awful and significant, that they fell back from Him like men "amazed," who can hardly bear some vision of horror; then He called them on, and told them of all that men should do to Him. And He said, "and they shall mock Him<sup>9</sup>."

Through Jericho, then, the pilgrims passed on to the

<sup>6</sup> Adrichomii Terra S. in Benjamin, page 17.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. ii. sect. x. p. 286.

<sup>8</sup> "They are still thieves." See Dr. Robinson, Ib.

<sup>9</sup> S. Mark, x. 32. 46.

city where the Lord was crucified. Resting at the monastery of S. Eustochius in the way, they reached at length the object of their long and painful travel, the city Jerusalem, once the joy of the whole earth, the favoured place of God ; where in the day of its visitation, God manifest in the flesh exhibited to cruel unfeeling man all long-suffering and patience, and in return for the agonies which man inflicted, streamed forth to him from His wounds forgiveness and love. The first place they sought was Calvary, and the spot where the holy cross was found, and the garden and sepulchre near, in which the Lord was laid.

Modern visitors have been led to doubt the true site of Calvary, because they find it "within the walls<sup>1</sup>." They argue, that the place of our Lord's crucifixion, as we are expressly informed, was without the gate of the ancient city<sup>2</sup>. The words of St. Willibald are important, as giving an answer to this objection. "Formerly," he says, "this church stood outside of Jerusalem. But the blessed Helena, when she found the cross, enclosed the place within the walls of Jerusalem."

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built by St. Helena, and described by Eusebius, had been burned more than a century past by the Persians, under Chosroes, when Jerusalem was taken in 614. The structure of the empress was very magnificent, enclosing under one roof the place of the crucifixion, of the invention of the cross, and of the sepulchre. These had lain concealed, partly by the ruins of time and desolations of Jerusalem, and partly through the rage of heathen malice, which

<sup>1</sup> Journal of a Tour in Palestine, by a Lady.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. ii. sect. viii.

seeks to obliterate Christ's memorial, until she discovered their site, and restored the sepulchre. In the narrative of St. Willibald, it is thus described: "Three crosses of wood stand on the east side of the church by the wall, in memory of the Lord's holy cross, and the others who were crucified with Him. They are not in the church, but stand forth under a roof without the church. Hard by is the garden, wherein was the sepulchre of our Saviour; and the sepulchre is hewn in a piece of rock, which from a broad base below, runs up to a narrow point above, on the summit of which a cross stands. A church of marvellous beauty is built over it. On the east side of the rock in which the sepulchre is hewn is a door, by which they enter who would go in to pray. And on the northern side, upon the right hand as they enter to make their orisons, is a bier, whereon the holy body of Christ lay. On the bier are fifteen bowls of gold filled with oil, which keep lights that burn continually day and night. At the door of the sepulchre is a large square stone, to figure that stone which the angel removed from the mouth of the sepulchre."

We are commonly ready to allow the deep effect upon the heart, which tokens and memorials of a sufferer work. We all know the power they have of bringing home to us, and realizing the verity of what he has undergone. All our compassion is awakened by a little token from a friend we have lost<sup>3</sup>, for the eyes are more faithful witnesses than the ears; and at the sight of Cæsar's bloody robe, Antony's hearers burst forth into tears and groans<sup>4</sup>. Thus we feel this sympathy with earthly friends, or with Cæsar's wounds, but we

<sup>3</sup> "Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis."—Horace.

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, Rhetoric, ii. 8.

profess to be at a loss to comprehend how faithful men in former days could so learn to suffer with Christ. Not so the great-hearted Willibald. These touching memorials, and that most holy place, filled his soul full of sweet sorrow, as the bowls of oil upon the bier. He lay prostrate in prayer upon Calvary, crucified to the world. Like Mary Magdalene of old, he kissed the footsteps of the Lord, and washed them with his tears. And at last, after visiting the holy sepulchre, whether from previous fatigue and exhaustion, from travel or other pre-disposition, or from strong emotion affecting him, on beholding the place where the wounded body of the Saviour lay, he fell very ill. Men now-a-days, sensual or worldly, whose hearts are as the nether millstone, will look upon such effects as the symptoms of a hypochondriac, and call it mere raving and weakness, if they do not pronounce it hypocrisy. For so the world, judging from itself, thinks of God's saints; what does not affect it, cannot really affect others, so it presumes; as if they could not be true-hearted, because it is so faithless and cruel: but neither would be moved to sorrow, though the awful scene of Calvary were again acted visibly before them.

It was the end of autumn when St. Willibald fell sick, about St. Martin's Day in the second year of his pilgrimage; and he continued very weak and ill for six weeks; yet, feeble as he was, he continued his visits of devotion, and contrived to crawl to the churches and holy places of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem at that time, as to the present day, stood upon a site something altered from that of the ancient city. The line of walls was nearly the same as Adrian's, when he rebuilt it and called it *Ælia Capitolina*<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. i. sect. vii.



Sion itself became a ploughed field, and the whole city has moved to the north west, and towards Mount Calvary. Arculfus, who visited it in the seventh century, speaks of the south wall as excluding Sion<sup>6</sup>. Part, however, of it in the city of David, as well as the area of the temple, or Mount Moriah, was included. The walls had been probably repaired by the Mahometans after their capture of it. Still it stands on its lofty position upon its hills, which gives it a beautiful appearance, and a cool and salubrious air.

St. Willibald sought, first after the sepulchre, the church of Sion, or of the Cœnaculum, the holy chamber of the Last Supper. How vividly the picture of that solemn scene would now rise upon his mind with all its thrilling interest, sensitive as he was through bodily weakness, and full of the blessed Saviour's sufferings! How would he imagine to himself the look, with which He gave to those He loved His last precious gift, even Himself—that henceforth they might “take and eat;” and distribute to multitudes, ever giving again the bread of life to thousands, yet themselves remaining twelve baskets full. The church of the Cœnaculum is at Sion gate on Sion hill, and was built by St. Helena. From thence he went down through the city to the pool of Bethesda, one of the tanks or cisterns by which the city was anciently supplied with water; at which the sick were cured when the angel came down upon the pool. In the time of St. Willibald it still was a “Piscina;” but now for two centuries it has been dry<sup>7</sup>. Thence he went down to the Gate of the Valley, to visit the church and sepulchre of St. Mary, in the valley of Jehosha-

<sup>6</sup> Adamnanus ex Arculfo. <sup>7</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. i. sect. vii.

phat<sup>8</sup>. It is a deep and narrow vale on the east side of the city, separating Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, and the brook or torrent Cedron runs at the bottom of the hollow. "Just without the gate stands," says St. Willibald, "a great pillar, and on the top of the pillar a cross, for a sign and memorial of the place where the Jews would fain have taken away the body of holy Mary; for as the eleven Apostles<sup>9</sup>" (St. Thomas was said to be away), "taking holy Mary's body, carried it out of Jerusalem, when they came to the city gate the Jews would have laid hold upon it; and upon this, those men who put forth their arms towards the bier to take her away, remained as if glued, with their arms caught upon the bier, and could not move, until, by the grace of God, and the Apostles' prayers, they were freed, and then they let them go on. Holy Mary passed from this life in the place in the middle of Jerusalem, which is called sacred Sion. From thence, as has been told, the Apostles carried her; and afterward the angels came and carried her to paradise<sup>1</sup>."

Thus from the cross of Calvary, St. Willibald, after the example of St. John, who lived in the same home with Mary, sought Mary's church and shrine. The same sword which pierced her heart, had wounded his,—sympathy with our Lord's sufferings. The church of Mary lies in the valley of Jehoshaphat, over the brook Cedron, and in it is her sepulchre, "not that," says the narrative, "her body is there, but in memorial of it, that there it lay." After making his orisons there, the saint ascended the Mount of Olives, the eastern side of the steep ravine. There is the garden of Geth-

<sup>8</sup> Adrichom. in Jerusalem, page 172. <sup>9</sup> Baronius, anno 48.

<sup>1</sup> De Assumpt. Virg. Mariæ. Vid. Baron. Eccl. Ann. anno 48.

semane, the second paradise, until Judas, like a second Satan, broke in upon its hallowed bounds to betray. Still some ancient olive trees are standing<sup>3</sup>, and at that time a church marked the spot of our Lord's lonely watch for the coming of the thief by night, and His awful agony at the thought, more bitter than man can fathom, of being forsaken of the Father.

Out of this he passed to the height of the Mount of the Ascension, from the depth of the Lord's humiliation, to the height of His glorification. On the very summit of mount Olivet stood the church, over the spot where the Lord left His last footsteps upon earth: "a little light is kept burning there, under a glass lamp-light, and the lanthorn of glass covers it all around, that it may burn both in sunshine and in rain; for that church is open above, and has no roof over;" that with the men of Galilee the Christians might look up into heaven, and in heart thither ascend. And thus, from the early home of Nazareth, through the land of Galilee and the waters of Jordan, to Jerusalem and Calvary, St. Willibald had followed the Lord's footmarks, and now stood on the confines of earth and heaven, gazing upon His last track of glory, and desiring with all saints to be drawn up after Him.

The winter of the year 725 was now over, and the second year of their travel completed. In the third year of his pilgrimage St. Willibald, with his seven companions, left Jerusalem to visit the cave of Bethlehem, which, next to mount Calvary and Olivet, was the great resort of pilgrims to the Holy Land; so that the gate of Jerusalem, which leads to Bethlehem, is still called the Pilgrims' Gate<sup>4</sup>. The country about Beth-

<sup>3</sup> Journal of a Tour in Palestine by a Lady.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. i. sect. vii., vol. ii. sect. x., p. 157.

lehem is still some of the richest in Palestine; "The whole tract before us," says the Modern Traveller, speaking of the route thither, "was full of olive groves, especially in Wâdy Ahmed, and on the slopes of Beit Yâla, and also in the valleys on the east of the low swell or water-shed; while towards Bethlehem, were likewise many orchards of fig-trees. Moreover, it abounded formerly in vines, and produced the richest wines in all Judæa." The name itself signifies the 'house of bread<sup>5</sup>.' There are fertile fields and pasture lands near, watered by a running stream, in which flocks of sheep and goats feed together. In these pasture grounds the angelic host announced the Nativity to the shepherds: the village stands upon a rocky ridge, seven miles from Jerusalem. The stable for cattle, the place of our blessed Lord's Nativity, was an excavation in the rock, hollowed out for that purpose. Afterwards, the surrounding earth was moved away, and a large church built over the whole by St. Helena, containing the cave or grotto as an inner shrine or crypt. "There," says St. Willibald, "over the place where the Lord was born, stands a high altar, and another lesser altar is made for this, that when they will celebrate the mass within the cave, they may carry this little altar within, to celebrate the mass there, and then again may carry it forth again without, and elevate it. The church, which stands over where the Lord was born, is built in the figure of a cross, an exceeding beautiful house<sup>6</sup>." Here, with the shepherds and the three eastern kings, the magi, they bowed in lowly adoration, humbling all their pride, as did those holy men of old, when they fell down and bowed before a little child. From Beth-

<sup>5</sup> Adrichomii T. Sancta in Juda.

<sup>6</sup> "Gloriosa domus."

lehem they went two miles to Thecua or Tekoa, the place of the murder of the holy Innocents; it is a rich pasture-land, and watered, as if to figure the pleasant pasture and waters of comfort, where there is no more crying nor tears, in which feed the suffering little ones of Christ <sup>7</sup>.

From Tekoa they travelled to the vale in which is the laura or monastery of the monks of St. Sabas. Communities of Anchorites dwelling in separate cells were called "lauræ," that is "streets" or villages. St. Sabas was a great founder of these, a holy man of the sixth century: one was near Tekoa, another in the "Monks' Vale," as it is still called by the Arabs, situated in the continuation of the valley of Jehoshaphat, between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea <sup>8</sup>. Already other monasteries have been mentioned, on Thabor and S. John's near Jordan; so that it seems there were considerable numbers then existing in the Holy Land. In the fourth century, in the time of St. Jerome, who was a monk of the convent of Bethlehem, Palestine was filled with monks and hermits, as well as the neighbouring deserts of Sinai: St. Jerome speaks of the "great multitude of brethren and bodies of monks, who dwelt in and around Jerusalem <sup>9</sup>;" but it is probable, at the visit of St. Willibald, their numbers were much diminished from what they had been, as the Saracens had destroyed many monasteries, and slain the monks during the wars; and not long after this time the monastery of St. Sabas was pillaged, and the Anchorites massacred, in a civil war that raged in Palestine. The greater monastery of St. Sabas is thus described by Willibald:

<sup>7</sup> Adrichomii in Juda.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. i. sect. vii.

<sup>9</sup> Ep. xxxviii. ad Pammach.

“ It is a large convent, and the abbot, and sacristan, and many monks live in the convent, and many other monks live round the valley in the steep rock of the mountain; and they have little chambers cut out here and there in the stony side of the mountain. The mountain runs like an amphitheatre round the hollow, and in the hollow the convent is built. There sleeps the holy Sabas.”

Leaving now the land of Judah, they went down by the road towards Egypt to the coast of the Philistines, through the region of Dan. There a church stood in a valley by the side of a fountain, marking the place where Philip baptized the eunuch. There the Ethiopian changed his skin, and becoming new and clean in the waters of Baptism, put away the dark curse of the son of Ham. From thence they came down to Gaza, and went to pray in the church of St. Matthias. And now a remarkable event occurred in the history of the saint: “ It was the Lord’s Day,” says the narrative, “ and great glory is in that church,” (probably miraculous manifestation is meant;) “ and after the solemn sacrifice of the mass, while St. Willibald stood looking on the mysteries, he lost the sight of his eyes, and was blind for two months.” There is something very mysterious in this history of the saint. It was at Gaza that Samson the warrior of the tribe of Dan lost his eyes, when he had declared the mystery of the seven locks. The things of faith may not be exposed; it is dangerous even to look into them too far: when the intellect of man has, with an eagle eye, gazed upon deep things of faith, until height and depth are opened, and it soars into the bright expanse which has neither fathom nor bound; when, with keen examination, it has pursued and brought out, as it were, into clear delineation, the delicate tracery



of the awful truths of Christianity, as a mathematician pursues the windings of a curve ; then what, if it falls, blasted with excessive light, and goes down through presumption to perdition ! St. Matthias succeeded Judas, and Judas had seen the Word of Life, full of “ all beauty and truth,” yet he felt it not, and fell like Lucifer. Awful thought ! especially in these times, when so many are taught to pry and examine, and leave nothing unexplored, so few are taught to feel ! when reason is enlarged, encouraged, expanded, until it is full blown, the heart is left unsubdued, undisciplined, unhumbled ; what must be the issue of such a terrible philosophy ? St. Willibald had been gazing upon the Sun of glory in His strength, from His dawning at Nazareth to His departing splendour on Calvary and Olivet, and now he was taught how to be secure against the danger. Bethlehem had taught him to bow down his reason and become as a weaned child. The Holy Innocents had taught him to suffer with Christ ; that thus, the dark Ethiopian hue of sinful man might be done away ; and his mind be renewed, which otherwise would utterly fall away. Two months of darkness gave him time to meditate on the lesson of humility, while he was led by the hand, first to Hebron, the burial-place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and from thence to Jerusalem. Again, as in his infant days, the salutary sign of the cross was his cure. He entered the church of the Invention of Holy Cross, and immediately his eyes were opened, and he recovered his sight. This is the security against pride, and a bridle upon enquiry, an anchor in the sea of mystery, and when reason is bewildered and lost, an illumination.

After a pause at Jerusalem, spent in thankfulness and devotion at this miraculous recovery, he went forth again,



as it were in a different guise, in the panoply of faith, with the cross upon his breast, like a Christian conqueror in triumph, having gained the victory over pride, the great destroyer of souls. First, he visited the church of St. George at Lydda, the martyred saint of Cappadocia, who for some noble feat in the fight of Faith, in which probably he met to the face the leviathan principle of anti-Christian pride, is ever said in the allegorical language of the prophet "to have wounded the dragon," and is styled a captain of the soldiers of the cross. From Lydda he went along the sea to Joppa, Tyre, and Sidon, cities emblematic of pride and luxury:—Tyre, the purple-clad harlot and sorceress, Sidon, the scene of Herod's blasphemous presumption, where he was smitten by the wrath of God, the type of Antichrist, and the man of sin. After passing through these, he went up mount Libanus by the valley of St. George, and over to Damascus, the City of Blood:—all images of horror, which indeed gather round the path of the Christian through the world, like the horrible fantastic figures conjured up round the hero of some old story of romance. Again he came to Jerusalem to spend the winter, for in the rainy season it is necessary to seek shelter in Palestine; and finally to Ptolemais, or Acre, and there kept Lent, completing the third year of wandering, since he left Rome.

The plague was now raging over the whole of Syria, and St. Willibald was seized with it at Acre, and could proceed no further. It is no small trial to be taken with a dreadful disorder in a foreign land, where no comforts or alleviations are to be obtained to ease one's sufferings; and this was now probably the condition of the Saxon prince. However, men of God do not suffer in such distresses that anguish of mind

which tortures common men. They do not feel that anxiety to escape out from the country attacked by pestilence, because it is ridiculous to think of fleeing out of God's hand. Still they know that under His feathers they are safe, and that He is their buckler and shield. Such thoughts spread a composure round their sick bed. Every tie which had bound St. Willibald's party to an earthly home had long been broken; they were palmers and not pilgrims;—for a palmer and a pilgrim, according to some, differ in this; a pilgrim has a home to which he returns when his vow is performed, a palmer has none; a pilgrim goes to a certain place in particular, a palmer goes to all; a pilgrim renounces his profession after a time, a palmer does never until he has won the heavenly palm of victory over the world<sup>1</sup>. St. Willibald, then, and his companions were palmers, for they had broken all the bands which tied them to England, left all what are called prospects in life, and renounced their home for ever. To die, to them was gain, because death is the avenue to the better land where the weary cease from wandering.

St. Willibald lay sick through Lent until Easter. Meanwhile he sent some of his companions to return to Edessa, and obtain a passport from the khalif for re-passing the frontiers, and returning to Europe. He was anxious for their sakes, though not for his own. It was necessary to obtain a second passport, because though they had leave to pass into the country, they had none to leave it, and the guard might have become more strict because of the plague. When the messengers arrived at Edessa, they found the khalif had left the country, having fled from the pestilence which was spread over

<sup>1</sup> Fosbroke on Pilgrim. ch. viii.

all that region, and they returned again disappointed to Ptolemais. Then waiting until St. Willibald was able to accompany them, they set out again for Edessa to petition the wealthy old sheik, or emir, who had first put them in prison, to give them letters. It seems he had the power, and perhaps he had a kindness for the noble Willibald, for he seems at his request to have given them readily, and even to have given them letters two by two for greater convenience of travelling, and obtaining food, for there was a famine, as well as a plague.

Once more, therefore, they returned for the fourth time to Jerusalem, to bid farewell to the Holy City; as though they could not be satisfied with viewing the sweet spots of the Saviour's sufferings, and seeking the repose of the Holy Sepulchre. After lingering there a while, they took a final leave of Jerusalem, and proceeded towards the coast, taking their route through Samaria. The city was then called Sebaste, and the church contained remains of St. John the Baptist. There, too, formerly lay the bones of the prophet Elisha, which by their touch raised the dead, and by that one surpassing miracle foreshowed those wonders which the Gospel should afterwards work through the bodies of Christ's saints. Near Samaria stood a castellum, the ancient Sychar, and there was Jacob's well, where the Lord asked drink of the woman of Samaria. A church was then built over it, fulfilling the words of the Lord, that there should be a Church throughout all the world supplying everywhere a spiritual worship, and living wells at which he who drinks doth thirst no more. The well of Jacob is now dry, and the church which stood over it is destroyed, and its columns lie broken by it.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. iii. § xiv. 109.

Then they came to a large village, at the extreme territory of Samaria, and now looked down upon the vast plain of Esdraelon, which lies between the mountains of Gilboa and Carmel, the ancient valley of Jezreel. The plain was planted with groves of olive trees. An African joined himself to their company with two camels and a mule, conducting a lady; probably for the sake of their protection and company in crossing the plain, in which there were lions. There are no lions in Palestine now, but Phocas<sup>3</sup> speaks of them in the twelfth century as lurking in the caves round the banks of Jordan. As they travelled through a woody part, a monstrous lion made towards them. By the advice of the African they kept steadily on, and the beast, cowed by their courageous self-possession, turned aside from the party, and made off. Afterwards they learned that the ravenous creature fell upon some olive-gatherers, and killed them. Christianity, by restoring innocence, restores the dignity and fallen majesty of man, before which the hungry beasts of the amphitheatre fell back in dismay<sup>4</sup>.

Thus they came down to the coast to a strong castle on the sea, upon a promontory of Lebanon, probably now Kulat or Shamaa<sup>5</sup>. Here their passports were demanded, and without them they would have been imprisoned. From thence they came to Tyre, to take their departure from the Holy Land; and at Tyre they were seized and rigorously searched, lest they should carry away any forbidden goods with them. Even at this time the profession of Christianity was abused by traders, who carried on a smuggling by means of pretended

<sup>3</sup> Ioan. Phocas de T. S. ap. Boll. Maii, t. ii.

<sup>4</sup> Ignatii Epist.

<sup>5</sup> See Dr. Robinson, Map.

pilgrimages<sup>6</sup>. Their provision-bags were filled with bales, which they thus exported free of duty or custom, from which pilgrims were usually made exempt by laws.

St. Willibald was no trader, but he had with him a little phial of balsam, which he bought at Jerusalem, and wished to carry away as a relic of the Holy Land. The balsam has medicinal virtues, and was a salve for wounds. The opobalsam, a very precious drug, grew formerly in the valleys of Engaddi, and the tree from which it exuded was called the vine of Engaddi. The plant is said to have been transferred to Egypt by Cleopatra into the gardens of Heliopolis. There it flourished, and is thus described by a traveller in the middle ages<sup>7</sup>: "The vine itself," he says, "is a tree small and low, its stem is short, and small in compass, commonly about a foot high, from which straight sprigs shoot every year. The former ones being pruned off, these run to the length of two or three feet, and bear no fruit; but near their extremities Christian men employed by the keepers of the vine open the rind with a lancet of sharp stone<sup>8</sup>, with a slit like a cross, and straightway they drop balsam in bright distilling drops; for it drops more freely when opened by Christian hands than when cut by filthy Saracens. It is sweet-smelling, light and small, much like the hazel-tree, with leaves very like the water-cress. It is diligently guarded, for it is a source of great treasure to the sultan." From this it seems to have been very precious; and now it is no longer known to exist. However, the Myro-balanum, according to

<sup>6</sup> Fosbroke c. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Itin. Sym. Simeonis, p. 49.

<sup>8</sup> See Tacit. Hist. b. v.

a recent traveller<sup>9</sup>, still grows in the neighbourhood of Jericho: it bears a green nut which produces oil, as the olives, and this oil is called balsam. It is highly prized by the Arabs and pilgrims as a remedy for wounds and bruises. The pilgrims call it Zaccheus' oil. It would seem to have been a phial of this latter kind that St. Willibald wished to take away as a religious memorial. He concealed it, says the narrative, in the following manner: "The phial was of cane, and into it he fitted a smaller cane cut even at the top and neatly fitted at the edge, and so put on the lid:" the smaller phial he filled above with a strong-scented oil called "*Petræ oleum*." This the searching officers smelt and let it pass. What the need of this ingenuity and concealment was, is not said. He ran some risk, for it is said if it had been found, he might have been killed<sup>1</sup>. Doubtless he had a religious reason for the value he set upon it.

At length, upon St. Andrew's day, they set sail from Palestine, in the fourth year since they left Rome, and the whole winter they were at sea. No doubt they went through much misery, in so tedious a voyage, which, though only from Palestine to Constantinople, took them in winter months, nearly as long as now it does to sail to the Antipodes: the danger was greater, and in discomfort and want of accommodation there would be no comparison. They landed at Constantinople just before Easter. Here St. Willibald staid two years. "In the church," says the narrative, "rest the bodies of the Holy Andrew and Timothy, and Luke the Evangelist in one altar; and the

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Robinson, vol. ii. § x. p. 291.

<sup>1</sup> Martirizatus.

great John, he of the golden speech, sleeps before the altar, beneath the place where the priest stands to perform mass." So great was St. Willibald's veneration and love for these great saints, that he and his companions had cells or chambers within the church, from which they could continually turn their eyes to the altar where they reposed. It is remarkable to see with what cordiality a Latin monk was then received at the central place of the Greek Church, and how perfectly he could then conform to it; but this happy state of Christendom did not continue long after that time.

It is a refreshment in a weary time and unquiet days, to turn back the aching sight from a world full of stirs and dissensions, and tossings to and fro, and forget it for a while in contemplating the peacefulness of men of former days. Follow them where we will, the same vision of peace meets us resting on the head of these saintly travellers. Everywhere they find quiet resting-places, because everywhere the Church is their home. They find no difficulty in staying, no reluctance in going. They have no prospects in life to wake thoughts for the morrow: like birds of the air, or flowers of the field, they have neither toil nor spinning—they wander not as happiness-hunters of modern times, from land to land like unquiet ghosts seeking rest and finding none; but be where they may, there is peace without, and peace unimaginable within.

Some time, during these two years, St. Willibald made a pilgrimage specially to Nicæa in Bithynia, to visit the church and the place of the great council gathered by Constantine. There were images or pictures of all the bishops present at it, three hundred and eighteen. It is difficult to understand why people do



not love such beautiful spectacles, unless it is because they are ashamed or afraid. Doubtless St. Willibald looked upon the solemn figures of these majestic bishops in their conclave with glad and happy eyes, and it brought to his mind a picture of the glory of the Church, "beautiful as the moon, terrible as an army with banners" in her saints' array. Having seen this church, he returned to Constantinople, and remained until the sixth year of his pilgrimage was over.

In the spring of the seventh year the Pope's nuncio and the legate of the Emperor were sailing to Italy, and gave our pilgrims an opportunity to return. At this very time differences were begun, and Gregory had written his letters of remonstrance to the disobedient Cæsar, Leo the Isaurian. Probably St. Willibald was one of the last of those who enjoyed the inter-communion of the eastern and western Churches before the schism which then followed. They set sail for Sicily, and arrived at Syracuse; from thence touching at Catana, they came to Reggio in Calabria, and from Reggio they sailed to see Volcano, one of the Lipari isles, at that time in a state of eruption. St. Willibald wished to ascend to obtain a view of the boiling crater, called then "the infernum of Theodoric;" but they could not climb the mountain from the depth of the ashes and scoria. So they contented themselves with a view of the flames as they rose with a roaring like thunder, and the vast column of smoke ascending from the pit. Modern geologists examine these phenomena with a cool unconcern, and lecture upon the lava; they draw no solemn thoughts from the awful spectacles of nature; that well is too deep for their superficial minds to draw from: saints have deeper feelings and less idle curiosity. Such images supply to them the terrible analogies in the

moral world, which faith makes visible through the shadows of the world of matter. Starting from thence, they touched at St. Bartholomew's on the shore of Italy near Beneventum, and landed at Naples. The archbishop of Naples received the party there with much state and dignity, owing indeed to their coming in company with dignitaries, the nuncio and legate; but such reception well became the noble and saintly pilgrims. He entertained them for some time; and being sent on from him to Capua and Teanum, they were hospitably received by the bishops of each place, whose duty it is, as then was practised, to entertain strangers, until they came to the Benedictine monastery of Monte Casino, so famous at that time and afterwards. There they were received as brethren, and took up their abode<sup>2</sup>.

The abbot of Monte Casino was Petronax of happy memory, who had restored that monastery from the ruined and desolate state to which it had been brought by the spoliations of the Lombards, and had revived in it the strict Benedictine rule, so that it became celebrated for its great order and regularity, and the number of its monks. At that time they were scanty in numbers, and the abbot welcomed them gladly. It was now the close of the seventh year of his pilgrimage, when the wanderer came to Monte Casino. St. Willibald was in the prime of life, near thirty years of age, and with his constitution unimpaired by the hardships and sufferings he had undergone. And now, strange contrast! after seven years on the move, he remained ten years in this quiet retreat, together with his friend Diapert, his faithful companion. During these ten years

<sup>2</sup> Baronius, An. 716.

he exhibited the model of a monk's character. He had taken up the tissue of his life, begun at Waltham, as if it were but yesterday. For the first year he served as sacristan of the church; the second year he filled the office of dean of the monastery; and the eight following years was porter, first of the convent on Monte Casino, which stands on a lofty hill, and afterwards of the convent lying beneath by the river in a lower situation. Thus in those days of meek faith, a king's son did not refuse to become a humble door-keeper to a poor brotherhood, for they counted it an honour and a pleasure then to wait upon others. True courtesy levels all ranks; it makes poor men into princes, and serving-men of kings. In that same monastery, not long after, king Carlomann became a menial for three years in disguise. It may seem strange, that after being dean of that monastery, the saint should become porter; but the rule of St. Benedict requires, that at the gate be placed a brother of staid character and advanced years, that he may always be in his place when wanted. The saint's maturity of mind would make up for his want of age, for in the moral world, the well-regulated mind of youth is fuller of years than old age undisciplined<sup>3</sup>. Now it seemed that he had fallen into the channel of his former life; and that like a soldier, his warfare over, or a seaman who has tossed upon the waves, he had retired into a calm repose. There, with the companions of his travels, he could recall the scenes they had gone through, and meditate on the sufferings and patience of the Lord. Such ease and indulgence of our heart may be vain when things of the world are concerned; but the retirement of saints is a preparation for toil. Divine providence

<sup>3</sup> Οὐχ ὁ χρόνος, ἀλλ' ὁ τρόπος κρίνεται.—Clemens, Rom.

was preparing a fresh call for St. Willibald to come forth into a life of action. He had had his time for improvement of self, he was to have his time of labouring for others; and his former life of wild travel and eager penance had been a suitable introduction to the toils which were to follow. He was to be the missionary of the Germans, under S. Boniface, who was now at Rome.

The great Apostle of Germany returned to his labours in 738. The next year a Spanish priest came on a visit for a while to the Benedictine convent on Monte Casino. He wished naturally to see Rome; and asking the leave of the Abbot Petronax, begged at the same time the company of St. Willibald, whom he had probably become attached to during his visit, and whose previous knowledge of Rome ten years ago, and long travel, made him a desirable companion and guide to the threshold of the Apostles. The place of his retirement had become endeared to St. Willibald; but he assented with that ready willingness to oblige, and obedience to the wishes of others, which characterise men whose wills have been subdued by Christianity, so he went with the priest of Spain, and they came to the Basilica of St. Peter's together.

Gregory III. heard that the brother of Monte Casino was come to Rome, and desired to see him. St. Willibald when brought into his presence made obeisance to the ground with great reverence. Gregory prayed him to recount the story of his pilgrimage, and drew from him his adventures by repeated questions; the long hardships of the travel, their imprisonment, the bathing in the river Jordan, and the scenes of Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The beautiful old narrative says that many shed tears at hearing these things recounted, because there stood a living man who had done so much

for the sake of our blessed Saviour, and they themselves had done so little in return for His great love.

The Greek poet says there is pleasure in tears ; much more than in such tears as these. After he had delighted himself a long time with such conversation, the Apostolical Pontiff suddenly told him of the request of the great Boniface, that his nephew, Willibald, should be sent for from the convent of Monte Casino to help him in his great work of teaching the nation of the Franks ; and accordingly that it was his own wish and entreaty that he would go. Willibald, while expressing his willingness to obey, made request that he might ask permission from his superior, the Benedictine abbot, according to the monastic rule by which he was bound. Upon which the Pontiff commanded him to go ; saying, “it was enough for him to receive the order from himself, since his superior was equally bound to obey at any moment such commands as he should give him.” Upon this the saint submitted ; freely showing here, as throughout his life, the same simplicity of obedience without reserve, which marks his character.

Diapert, his friend, was left behind at Monte Casino. At Easter he departed from Rome, in the year 740, and went towards Germany. He came to Lucca : there he and his brother had buried the body of his father, St. Richard, nearly twenty years before. Much doubtless did St. Willibald long to come to that same repose, quieter even than his late retreat. But life with its toils and anxieties was beginning for him now anew, with forty more years of labour in his Lord's service. Thus in his instance was reversed the order of the perfecting of saints. He began with the contemplative life for forty years ; occupied in chanting psalms when a child ; in a pilgrim's meditations and devotions all his

youth, and hermit-like in his retreat in manhood: he then commenced anew the active life; untiring like the eagle on wing, which gazes on the sun, and wheel upon wheel rises ever vigorous towards the fountain of light.

Leaving Lucca, he came through Lombardy, where Luitprand, the Lombard, was preparing to disturb the peace of Italy, and so to Odilo, Duke of Bavaria, who received and entertained him for a week. From him he came to Count Suiger of Hirsberg, with whom he stayed another week, and then the count accompanied him to Linthrat, to Archbishop Boniface. The great Winfred—for so his name sounds more sweetly to our ears, though changed for euphony to Boniface,—was now marking out into episcopal sees the wild region he had brought to Christianity. Count Suiger had bestowed upon the Church the country of Aichstadt, then a waste forest land overspread with oaks, for the sake of charity and for the redemption of his soul. St. Boniface sent Willibald to look at it, as he had marked this for his future bishopric. It was a woody district, with scattered rude population, bearing, perhaps, some similitude to our wild colonial regions, with one small church in the whole dedicated to St. Mary; yet to a missionary it offered in one point a very different field for exertion—fresh though rugged tempers of German foresters, instead of an exhausted soil of seared and blighted hearts. Suiger and Willibald searched through the country for a suitable spot for fixing a residence and establishing a conventual body of clergy. It is pleasing for a moment to dwell on the method of conducting a mission in such ancient times. The reality of Christianity when brought newly to a heathen land has nothing about it that can be called absurd or ridiculous;



nothing but what is solemn and great :—if it prevails it does so in beauty, and if it suffers it suffers in majestic pain.

Both of these apostolic men, Winfred and Willibald, were remarkable for their fair bodily proportions as well as saintliness ; and such angelic messengers well befitted the good tidings of the holy Evangele. Wise counsel was shown in building religious houses in a fitting manner, with attention to their place on some beautiful and healthy site, and generally if possible near some running water. Thus the dignity of religion was not compromised, and its stateliness, far surpassing the natural dignity of man, awed the savage mind which, as may be observed in children too, is keenly alive to notions of grandeur and sublimity, and quick in detecting what is laughable or mean. After staying some time to explore, and having chosen a site, they returned to St. Boniface, at Frisinga <sup>6</sup>, and afterwards he in person came with them to Aichstadt, and there he ordained Willibald priest, on St. Mary Magdalen's day, July, 740 ; and he entered upon his duties as priest of St. Mary's of Aichstadt.

The archbishop had written letters to Gregory III., praying his sanction to make four new bishoprics, and his design had been approved. In this year Gregory died, and Zacharias succeeded. The archbishop prayed him to confirm, by seal and letters patent, the four sees. Zacharias signified his consent ; only he requested that no very small or insignificant place might be honoured with so great a dignity, lest the name of bishop become too common and be despised. It seems that in consequence of this Erfordt, which was designed for one,

<sup>6</sup> Ann. Eccl. German. lib. 4. lxxii.



was left out ; but Wirtzberg and Burburg were dignified with a bishop's chair <sup>7</sup>.

In the autumn of the year 741, about Martinmass, St. Boniface sent for Willibald to come to him to Salzburg, in Thuringia. Accordingly he repaired thither. In the way he was lodged hospitably by his brother Winibald, who received him in his monastery. It was now many years since he had seen him, and the meeting must have been very interesting, for each had much to tell. Probably it was eighteen years since they had seen one another ; and the one had been to Palestine—the other had been back to England. That they might have met if they pleased is certain, for at one time St. Winibald was at Rome while his brother was at Monte Casino, and they had for the last year been not far from one another in Germany. Could these two brothers, it will be asked, have loved one another ? what indifference is here ?—so the world will say : but the world, like children, judges only by tokens and signs—it looks for exhibition and display of feeling, whereas true affection is deep and still, and often has the appearance of coldness. The two brothers, though they had not sought the meeting, truly rejoiced together when they met ; not as if they were estranged by long absence from each other, but as if they had parted yesterday. As soon as Willibald arrived at Salzburg, the archbishop, together with his two newly created Bishops of Wirtzberg and Burburg, Burchard and Wizo, laid their hands upon him and consecrated him Bishop of Aichstadt. Having paused a week, he returned to the place of residence which had been appointed to him.

He was now in his forty-first year ; and he began

<sup>7</sup> Ann. Eccl. German. lib. 4. lxxxvii.

with untiring vigour to bring his wild diocese into order. The plan he pursued was to establish in all parts of the wide spread region religious houses. He penetrated into the depths of the woodlands for this purpose: Monte Casino and St. Benedict was his model. Three of his countrymen and fellow pilgrims either accompanied him from thence or joined him, and these he established with himself at Aichstadt.

The next year, in May, the archbishop called a council, which is nearly the last incident on record in St. Willibald's life. St. Boniface had long had it at heart, and petitioned the leave of Carlomann, the most powerful of the sons of Charles Martel, and obtained the sanction of Zacharias, the pontiff. Carlomann attended with his barons, and St. Boniface sat with about twelve bishops. St. Willibald was his chancellor and chief adviser. The canons passed at this synod are interesting, since they give us an insight into difficulties the Church had to struggle with in subduing the wild people of Germany.

There is a canon among them to forbid ordained priests and monks from wearing arms and going to war, and from going hunting and hawking; things to which from ancient times the inhabitants were used, for a German was by nature from his birth a warrior and a forester. There is a canon for the garb of priests and deacons; that they wear the chasuble and not a common mantle; and very severe statutes against immoralities in the clergy are enacted; for any instance in a priest, scourging until the flesh of the body was laid open, and imprisonment for two years with fasting on bread and water<sup>8</sup>. But especially there are curious canons against heathen superstitions, with a list subjoined of some of the most

<sup>8</sup> See *Annales Eccl. Ger.* lib. 4. cxxiii.

remarkable. For instance, burning the dead is forbidden; and offering dead-men's meats, which were probably little pieces of meat and cups of beer left at the graves or tumuli. A feast called "Hornung," or the drinking bout, is forbidden. Meeting in churches to revel and keep wassail; for, strange and shocking as it seems, yet it is not to be wondered that wild untamed dwellers in the woods should easily transfigure the joy of Christianity into their own merry-meetings, and so introduce, as it seems they did, a wild licence into the churches in which they assembled; feasting and drinking went on, and even drawing lots or gaming and alternate choruses were sung instead of the Church's antiphons. Besides this they adored forest trees:—nine heads<sup>9</sup> of slaughtered animals were hung in a row upon the boughs. They did sacrifice and placed lights at high stones and rocking stones. They did sacrifice to Christian saints as to gods, wore amulets, made incantations, auguries, and divinations, and took signs from dogs, hares, crows, and cuckoos. Reverenced places which they called "unsteten," where the fairies pinched them, that is where they received a hurt they could not account for, and such other vulgar superstitions as still linger among common people. They kept festivals of the god of war and of thunder; and at the waning of the moon or eclipse they used to howl aloud, as they said, to give help to it. All these things, and such as these, are forbidden. Under sentence of death it is forbidden that any should burn an old woman for a witch, acting under a deception of the devil and from heathen notions. So untrue is it that Christianity, though it avails itself of what is innocent and good in the practices of those it brings under its power, does countenance or

<sup>9</sup> See Life of St. Germanus, and Fouqué's Sintrim.

allow of idle superstition. On the contrary, departure from the Church has led back many miserable people, under the delusion of the devil, into these very superstitions.

Of St. Willibald's life few facts remain, beyond the general statements of his discharge of duties as a bishop. He encouraged agriculture and brought under the plough much of the uncleared and waste land of that region; to which the religious houses much contributed by introducing and teaching the arts of husbandry. Such was the wisdom and eloquence with which he was gifted, that St. Boniface often sent for him to Mentz. In the councils he was placed at the archbishop's right hand, and was his chancellor and prolocutor in all business, being made chief in honour of all the suffragan bishops: in particular he received a vestment called the rationale, an emblem of great wisdom and perfection, and which is one of the chief pontiff's robes.

He himself is thus pictured by Philip, afterwards Bishop of Aichstadt:—His alms were great; his watchings often; his prayers frequent; he was perfect in charity and gentleness; his conversation was very holy; the openness of his heart was glassed in the placidity of his face, and its affectionate kindness in the sweetness of his speech; and all that pertained to life eternal he exemplified in deed as he preached in word. His countenance portrayed the beauty of his soul, and the rest of his figure bore the character of sanctity. His look was majestic, and terrible to gainsayers; awfully severe, yet adorably kind. His step was stately and grave: when he reproved by authority, humility tempered the rebuke, and while the frown gathered on his brow to threaten the guilty, the kindness of his heart was pleading for them within. So towards those that did well he appeared a Peter; towards

those who did evil a very Paul ; and these graces were so in him united—the mercy of the former and the severity of the latter—that though his presence was awful his absence was painful. How little he sought his own ease, and how he had subdued his own will, how earnest he was in toil and patient in affliction, contempt, and poverty, while he fled from riches and honour, is seen in his life. His abstinence was very great ; for from contemplation of our Saviour's sufferings in his pilgrimage and retirement, his heart was so wounded, that tears were his food day and night. Much character is shown in the life which he wrote, and which remains, of the great Boniface. The preface shows his humility and the diffidence he felt in undertaking such a work.

In the year 761, Willibald buried his brother Winiwald, sixteen years afterwards his sister Walburga, for he outlived them both. They died as their father, in the sweetness of holiness, and most happily ; and the three were gone before him,—the last, but if we may compare the deeds of saints, the greatest of the family—to wait for him in paradise. He began his energetic life of holiness the first and ended it the last. His service was at length over, and he died, above eighty years old. The supposed date is the year 786.

St. Willibald was buried in the crypt of his own church of St. Mary of Aichstadt ; afterwards he was canonized by Leo VII., in the tenth century, and his relics carried from the crypt and laid beneath—first, the altar of St. Vitus, then in St. Mary's choir, and afterwards in the part of the cathedral of Aichstadt called St. Willibald's choir. The translation from the crypt was made by Bishop Henry, of Aichstadt, in the year 1256 ; and it is related, that on opening the sarcophagus a sweet fragrance issued from the bones.

LIFE OF

## St. Walburga,

VIRGIN, ABBESS OF HEIDENHEIM, DIED 780.

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IT is one of the wonderful things of wonder-working Christianity, that it seizes on all tempers and dispositions of mankind, and moulds them to its holy purposes, and thus it brings all their infinite variety into its own perfect unity ; like some vast Gothic Minster, which, while it is building, refuses not to take into its composition rude and fretted stones, as well as squared and smooth, and when complete blends them all into a beautiful harmonious whole, deriving not the least part of its grand effect from those jutting cornices and irregular friezes, which in their detail are so grotesque and strange. Christianity rejects none ; if only there is a willing heart, surrendering itself such as it is, worthless, or weak, or care-eaten and cankered, of such it can still make use in furthering its great design.

It would seem at first sight impossible, that weak children, and delicate women, whom the world has never, so to speak, cauterized into hardness, could have strength enough to embrace the pains of the cross ; they will surely turn away from the first taste of bitterness in the cup it offers, or faint at the sight of the fearful

shadows which fall upon its path. Yet the All-Merciful teaches the shorn lamb to abide the blast; and this very weakness when supported by Divine love becomes most strong. Christianity knows no difference of sex; in it there is "neither male nor female;" because there is but one character to which all must conform, one likeness which all must imitate; and from it man must learn all the gentleness and tenderness of woman, and woman must learn all the strength and severity of man. Many holy saints have persevered to the end, who have brought an innocent light-hearted gaiety, and weakness like the bending reed, to learn its sorrows. They find it hard, like St. Thomas, to believe its awful realities, and scarcely guess beforehand the pain they must go through; yet when it is understood, they receive it readily and with all their heart.

St. Walburga was the daughter of Richard, the Saxon king and Saint of the eighth century, and sister of the two holy brothers Winibald and Willibald. She lived as a child in the wealthy house of the king her father, and was probably his youngest child. When she was yet little, her father and brothers went away from England on pilgrimage to Italy and the Holy Land, and she was left behind. It is of her probably that her father speaks when he complained of leaving "children not yet grown up," and pleaded this with his son as a reason for not deserting his home. However, this objection was overruled, and they departed. The story does not say whether the mother was left with the orphan child; but Queen Winna the mother of Winibald and Willibald was dead, and if St. Walburga had a mother living, she was the daughter of a second wife, which the narrative seems to suppose.



She was taken to Wimburn Minster in Dorsetshire. It had been built only two or three years before, by Cuthberga, sister of King Ina, in the year 718. Into it she herself retired with her sister Queenburga, and there, together with other noble young ladies, amongst whom were St. Lioba and Thecla, they formed a convent of holy nuns under the Abbess Tetta. The two princesses were Walburga's relatives; and Lioba and Thecla were cousins, or at least connexions, for Winna was a relative of King Ina. But there is no need to seek for earthly ties to show how the orphan girl would find the convent a home; Christianity makes new fathers and mothers and friends and relatives to all its destitute children, and the Church is a home into which those who flee find a refuge for ever. There, as in some charmed palace of enchantment, the storms which rage in the world without, and scatter its unhappy children like driven leaves, blow no more, the rain and the sharp sleet of earthly sorrowing and care descend no more, and they repose in the arms of an everlasting embrace from which they shall never be torn.

St. Walburga stayed at Wimburn amongst these royal and saintly Saxon maidens for many peaceful years. Here she was instructed in the learning of those days, which consisted chiefly of knowledge of the Latin language, the speech of the Church through all the world, in which she afterwards wrote the lives of her brothers, and of the ladies' work of those days, spinning and weaving clothes and vestments, which then were simple and without embroidery; in such tasks she was a laborious work-woman. But the chief employment of the sisterhood was singing praise to God and prayer. Religion was the object of education, not mere knowledge independent of it; and purity and innocence of heart

were the ornaments with which they sought to be adorned. To this heavenly school St. Walburga brought a gracious disposition. The temper she inherited from her Saxon father was that of a free and noble maiden, with a full and affectionate heart overflowing with all sympathy and kindness, and bright and sunny like clear waters of a running stream. Such characters need to be taken out of the world, lest it spoil them : they excite a trembling interest while exposed to it, for fear that its rough breath touch them while they seem like a floating bubble quivering, and expanding, and ready every moment to burst and melt away. They have their peculiar dangers ; they meet with much indulgence, and they are apt to become fond of it ; they are unconscious of evil, and therefore likely to fall into it unawares. Their goodness of heart has prevented their needing much control ; and hence they are apt to become wilful ; and not being accustomed to reproof, they become impatient of rebuke, and are afflicted at the little crosses and disappointments of life. She brought also with her the bold and ready temper which characterized her brother Willibald, and which often accompanies women, and those who are inexperienced in evil ; such persons are forward to encounter peril, when the more circumspect draw back ; like St. Thomas when he cried, " Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

A convent life supplied all the requisites for the judicious management of such a character, and giving it strength and consistency. The regularity it enjoins, the privations it puts upon the self-indulgent, and continual superintendence, are means calculated to bring about the patient resignation and habitual self-control which is needed to form a well-regulated mind. She continued subject to its discipline twenty-eight years, like a

prolonged happy childhood, until she was called forth to new duties in a distant land. This long schooling was preparing her for missionary labours. "Grown people," says the great philosopher, "ought to be schooled." It is a mistake to think that our education is completed when we have come to a stated period of life; the bands of discipline draw tighter round us as we advance in years, and moral schooling can never cease, until the will is subdued. So false is the modern theory, which would burst the bands in sunder before a single passion has been curbed, and proposes as a serious problem, "how soon it would be advantageous for the youthful mind to cast away the trammels of teaching and control, and launch forth on its own judgment, and with unshackled will to seek for truth, and become free."

Her father died at Lucca before the first year of his pilgrimage was over. Her brother Willibald went on to Palestine, and, after wandering seven years, came back to Italy, and stayed at the monastery of Monte Casino, but never returned to England. Winibald came back again, after a lapse of years, to visit his home. He was of a feeble and sickly constitution, and could not accompany his brother to the Holy Land, so he stayed at Rome: perhaps it was partly to breathe again the fresh air of England that he came home. It was natural that Walburga should become most attached to him, because she had seen most of him; he alone of that beloved company whom she could remember leaving her behind in childhood had returned again, and his sickness made him more dear to her; and thus, through after-life, while she admired her brother Willibald, she clung with affectionate fondness to Winibald.

Their uncle Winfrid was meanwhile engaged in his great work of evangelizing Germany. He found no

companions in labour suit him so well as his Anglo-Saxon countrymen ; and many of these flocked to him, stirred by the fame of the great things he was doing, like soldiers who gather to the standard of some great adventurous general. In those days men felt a deep thrilling interest, a sublime romance, in going out to rescue from the captivity of Satan a nation that sat under his dark control, because then the reality of their deliverance into light out of darkness, was a thing more vividly felt ; the effects of holiness and faith were more visible, and by consequence the effects of unholiness and unbelief more deplorably evident. In order to be interested in religion men must really understand what a deliverance it is, and that to recover captives out of the great enemy's hand is a more glorious and heart-stirring crusade than was ever undertaken against infidels or Saracens to recover the Holy Land. Illuminated men feel the privileges of Christianity, and to them the evil influence of Satanic power is horribly discernible, like the Egyptian darkness which could be felt ; and the only way to express their keen perception of it is to say, that they see upon the countenances of the slaves of sin, the marks, and lineaments, and stamp of the evil one ; and they smell with their nostrils the horrible fumes that arise from their vices and uncleansed heart, driving good angels from them in dismay and attracting and delighting devils. It is said of the holy Sturme, a disciple and companion of Winfrid<sup>1</sup>, that in passing a horde of unconverted Germans as they were bathing and gambolling in a stream, he was so overpowered by the intolerable scent which arose from them, that he nearly fainted away. And no doubt such preternatural dis-

<sup>1</sup> Vit. S. Sturmii, ap. Mabillon. an. 779.

cernments are sometimes given to saints, that men may understand how exceedingly offensive a sinful man is in God's sight. Men with their eyes thus opened, understood the inexpressible gift and value of Holy Baptism. They looked upon it as like the "milk-white root" that Ulysses bore in hand by the gift of heavenly Mercury to the cave of the sorceress Circe, and was himself shielded from the arts of hell, and restored from the shapes of filthy swine, his enchanted companions.

The great Winfrid or Boniface kept up correspondence with England ; he wrote to the Primate, giving accounts of his proceedings, and he wrote to the good Bishop Daniel of Winchester, his friend and instructor, and received advice from him as to the best means of converting the heathen. He now wrote to the Abbess Tetta, to send him some of her maidens to establish convents in Germany. Winibald had gone to him after his visit home, and no doubt had told him much of the holy sisters of Wimburn and their life of sanctity. It was then well understood, that in order to influence minds of men, not things but persons are required : it is personal character and holiness that alone is able to bend the wills and draw after it the affections of others. After such, men throng and follow, like superior beings descended upon earth ; for it is stronger and higher characters that always influence the weaker, and give a tone to the age and people among whom they live. This is true as well of bold and daring spirits who influence mankind for evil ; but there is this vast difference, good men attract others by admiration of superior goodness, bad men by the admiration of superior power. For this reason St. Boniface wished to have as many as he could of his countrymen and countrywomen, as being well instructed in the ways of religion ; for England was then

“the Isle of Saints.” These he made a nucleus of ecclesiastical bodies through the newly converted and imperfectly taught heathen land; these penetrated into the wildernesses and fastnesses of the forests, everywhere establishing central bodies round which whatever was good might gather, and ramify again; the churches of these little colleges of monks were called “minsters,” or monasteries, and hence the term which is properly applied to central churches of districts having collegiate bodies attached to them.

The letters of St. Boniface came to Wimburn in the year 748, requesting by name Walburga, as well as Thecla and Lioba, to come to him and her brother in Germany. Walburga, on hearing the message, went to her oratory to pray. She was filled with emotion at the thought of leaving the peaceful Wimburn in which she had lived since her childhood nearly thirty years. Affectionate persons cling to places and people they have been used to, and a home they have loved, like a limpet to its accustomed rock; it is like parting with life to be taken away: but again, she would go to meet her brothers, and especially the meek and sickly Winibald; and the request came from her uncle, so much honoured and revered, that it would seem a crime not to comply with his desire. However, she simply prayed that the Divine will might be done concerning her, not that her own will either to stay or go should be done. And she received an answer to her prayers, for God revealed to her, that all had happened by appointment, and that she must not doubt to accept the invitation. Upon this she joyously and readily made preparations for departure. The convent, which was very large, had means for supplying the expenses of the travel. Part of the lands and wealth of Walburga’s father had been no doubt



given to it when he left his principality ; and King Ina's endowments of Abingdon and Glastonbury show that he would not be less generous to the abbey in which his sisters lived retired from the world. Thirty companions undertook to accompany her, a number which seems large for a convent to send away, but there were five hundred maids at Winburn. Perhaps among these, and it is probable it was so, were Lioba, and Thecla ; and if so, the parting from Winburn must have been made much easier to Walburga ; for she took away with her the greatest treasure of the convent in these once her cousins, now her dear sisters. Lioba especially, from her sweetness of temper and perpetual joyousness, would be to her a delightful companion.

Having bid farewell to happy Winburn, they set sail from England in a ship which had been procured. It sounds now like the act of very adventurous maidens to set forth thus in travel to a land far away ; but the thing was then so usual that it would hardly have excited remark ; and in Christian land, and not long before the days of Charlemagne, they would meet every where with chivalrous attention and respect. It is not however to be denied, that owing to the great number of young persons who then streamed abroad from England in pilgrimages to Italy, and elsewhere, as was to be expected in impulses which carry great multitudes, grievous scandals did occur. At first their voyage was calm ; but when they got out to sea, a storm arose. The distress of these simple maids, who had lived so long in entire repose, may be well imagined. The sinking of the heart as the long interminable swell of the sea rises and falls ; the roll and shiver of the vessel as it swims giddily over each successive wave and down again with a drunken reel into the deep trough



which seems to swallow it: the distracted look of the tossing yards and flapping sails and ropes, which whistle to the wind like a madman's streaming hair; the hungry look of the pitiless waters as they fling themselves up with the greedy spring of a lion at his prey; these to the inexperienced landsman form a scene and give sensations of misery and despair that overwhelm and overpower all energy of body and mind. The violence of the tempest increased, until the sailors themselves thought all was lost, and began to throw overboard the tackling to lighten the vessel. But no created thing can shake the confidence of the soul that has faith in God the maker of them all, and the floods cannot drown love. Walburga prayed to God her Saviour, and rising from prayer full of holy power bade the elements be still. The winds and waters heard the voice of God speaking in his servant, and obeyed, and there succeeded a miraculous calm, as if the peace and gentleness that dwelt in her bosom had spread itself like oil over the sea. Shortly they came to land, and put into port overjoyed, giving thanks to God, and regarding Walburga with veneration.

She and her companions travelled on to Germany, where they arrived without further adventure; though it took them long time, and without doubt to such tender wanderers cost vast fatigue. They found the Archbishop Boniface, and his suffragan bishop Willibald, Walburga's brother, at Mayence. These received her with much joy, and listened with pleasure to the narrative, how Divine revelation had confirmed their call to her to leave Winburn, and come abroad to them, and how Providence had protected them safe through the dangers of the way.

Her brother Winibald, she was told, was in Thuringia,

with seven churches, or rather seven monastic houses, under his superintendence. To him she desired to go, and establish her convent near him, and under his rule. It was then common for separate bodies of monks and nuns to be under one head. There were monks at Winburn, besides her maidens, under the Abbess Tetta. The Benedictine rule was at that time very universally followed; and St. Boniface, Willibald, and Winibald were all Benedictines<sup>2</sup>. Having obtained leave, she went to Winibald, and was received by him, and settled for a time in a convent beside him there. Thecla and Lioba were sent to other parts of Germany, then called Allemaigne, to be abbesses, and establish separate sisterhoods.

It strikes us with astonishment to contemplate the vast ecclesiastical force, as it may be called, which was in this manner brought into play. The whole country was thrown under an organized system, which was perpetually diverging, like rays of light, further and further into the recesses of the land, yet centralized in abbots and bishops of districts, and finally in the vigorous archbishop himself, at Mayence, who had planned the scheme, and brought it to bear. The state of the people demanded energetic exertions. Christianity had spread rapidly among them, and therefore imperfectly. The vast idea cannot be caught in a moment, and requires, like some great shadow or outline, teaching and developement to realize it to individuals; the eye which has been accustomed to prison darkness must be allowed gradually and slowly to dilate, before it can bear the day and distinguish objects.

<sup>2</sup> For the controversy on this subject, vid. Alban Butler on March 21, Life of St. Benedict.

Much therefore was to be supplied or corrected, and there were great chasms to be filled. The wild superstitions of that imaginative people clung still to them, which had grown up into a thousand fanciful shapes, engendered among the deep and gloomy forests with which the land from ancient times had been overspread. Besides all this, there were grievous heresies to be combated, which had already sprung up, in which the German brain has since been so fruitful.

The Abbot Winibald, by exhortation and rebuke and unwearied patience, had brought his district of seven churches into a great state of order, from which they long after benefited. He also made visits into further parts, and Bavaria, notwithstanding the feebleness of his sickly frame; he continually came to Mayence to consult with Boniface and his brother Willibald, bishop of Aichstadt, and was often obliged to spend much time there.

But this life did not suit Winibald; he was past fifty, and his body enfeebled by long infirmity, and he longed for greater retirement; he was naturally studious and contemplative, and his conversation with his uncle and brother turned much on the mysteries of religion. A hermit's cell and life were the things for which he longed; his diet was already hermit's fare, for he ate but little from his infirmity, and drank no wine except for medicine. He wished therefore to flee away from the rich wine country bordering the Rhine, in which his monks were exposed to dangers from an easy and luxurious life, and seek some spot more inland, where they might live more like anchorites and have greater need of manual labour for their support. Full of these desires, he went for advice to Willibald his brother at

his "mynster" of Aichstadt. This was situated, as the name signifies, amongst the forests of oak that grow around the feeders of the Danube. By the advice of his brother he purchased a spot that lay retired among the hills for the site of his future monastery.

This place of retreat was called "Heidenheim," perhaps from its secresy, and afterwards retained the name; it was a deep vale among lofty mountains in the wilds of Sualaveldia, or Suevia, watered by gushing mountain streams, and at that time densely covered with forest trees, which stood in their primæval and untouched magnificence: the sight of this solitary and majestic scene struck a note which responded to the chords which were ringing in the heart of the contemplative Winibald. He was one of those who bear ever in their thoughts the notes of the "everlasting chime," which to those who have ears to hear falls in unison with the calm melancholy sound of hidden waters running in steep places, and the winds sweeping over the heads of the great forest trees and the bristling sides of the mountains; they realize the magic tale of the huge Æolian harp which hung from tower to tower, catching on its strings every sweet and solemn sound that wakes at the passing feet of the wandering wind. It is natural for such souls to seek for solitude, that, like the nightingale, they may sing alone.

"Here," he exclaimed, "shall be the place of my rest!" and indeed it was destined to be the place of his everlasting repose; for he had sought it, like the stricken deer seeks the thicket, to die there. Here he brought his sister Walburga, and built a church and double monastery for his monks and nuns. This was done about the year 752. Immediately they began to clear a space in the wood for cultivation; and Winibald laboured

himself with axe in hand with his younger monks, like Elisha in the days of old, and toiled at cutting away underwood, and breaking up the waste uncultivated ground. The work itself was great, and they were hindered besides by the opposition of the natives, who, though the place was purchased, probably looked with a jealous eye upon these improvements introduced into their ancient hunting-grounds, and considered the old oak-trees of the silent vale the hallowed haunt of elves and fairies, and looked down upon their cutting down as a desecration. Time elapsed, and the monks and nuns of Heidenheim became settled, the natives became reconciled, and converts received into the monastery, which swelled in numbers; the face of the country improved by the arts of cultivation which were learned from the monks' example and assistance, and the neighbouring barons gave of their lands freely to its support; and the abbot and abbess were heads of a flourishing society, in what had been a wilderness.

Meanwhile Winibald's health daily declined, until at length he was unable to move from his bed and chamber which was made for him into a little chapel, and fitted with an altar, on which every day that he was able, he celebrated mass, until his quiet and gentle spirit parted happily in the year 761, eight or nine years since he had come to the retreat of Heidenheim. Willibald his brother came and buried him there.

Walburga mourned deeply the loss of her brother. He had been all in all to her; and her affectionate heart had found in him an object in which all the feelings which ties of kindred awaken had centred. He had been to her the pledge of the family from which she had so early parted. His long sickness had still more endeared him to her, and his musing melancholy

turn of mind, like a strain of solemn music, awakened all her tenderness. Her grief was a constant inward mourning, like what poets call the dove's for her mate; and thus his death transfused, as it were, into her mind that deep sorrow which perhaps is necessary to be mingled with joyousness to complete the training of the human soul for future happiness. Milton errs when he sets the two at war; in truth they harmonize; the ecstasies of joy and melancholy unite as it were at their confines. She had spent a long life in unbroken smiles, and now she learned to steep her mind in tears. The rue and the thyme do not give their scent so well, until they are bruised.

Her dying brother commended to her care, not only the maidens, but the monks of Heidenheim. So that, like the holy Tetta at Winburn, she was now abbess and mother of both. Thus her duties and cares increased with her sorrows, and these she fulfilled with all the kindness and watchfulness of a mother, except perhaps, that from her great gentleness and meekness, she brought herself sometimes into neglect from those about her, and, as we may believe of the holy Paul, into contempt. "One evening," says her history, "after vespers were over, she stayed alone to pray in the church of the monastery which her brother had built, and remained there until it was late, and the darkness closed in. She rose from her prayers to return to her cell, and asked the sexton of the church, whose name was Goumerand, to light her to it. The churlish monk refused." (Perhaps he was tired with waiting for her so long to finish her prayers, and was of a sour disagreeable temper.) "The abbess meekly retired to her cell without a light, patiently taking the affront, and the time of the evening meal having passed, remained there without



having supped. In the night the sisters were roused by a bright supernatural light streaming from Walburga's cell, and lighting up all their chambers. Startled and terrified, they watched the illumination, which continued until the stroke of the bell for matins, when they gathered to the chamber of the holy Walburga, and with wonder and fear told her what they had seen. She bursting into tears, "thanked God for the heavenly visitation which had been vouchsafed to her, and ascribed it solely to the prayers and merits of her brother Winibald, through whom she said the contempt put on her had thus been turned to honour."

Another incident which is thus related, shows Walburga's great meekness and humility, and the miraculous gifts with which she was endowed; the former of which was so great in her, that indeed, according to the judgment of St. Paul, it is more excellent, and more to be wondered at than the latter. "Late of an evening, while she yet mourned for her brother Winibald, she went out unattended and unobserved from the convent, moved by Divine impulse. She wandered to some distance to the house of a neighbouring baron, whose daughter lay dying. There she stood at the door, appearing like a wandering beggar, not venturing through meekness to pass within or present herself. The baron was a huntsman of the forest, and his wolf-hounds," which had probably been kept from the chace, "hungry and fierce, gathered round the door of the hall about Walburga. Seeing her standing there, and in danger as he supposed of being torn down by them, the rough huntsman asked angrily, who she was, and what she wanted there. The abbess replied, "that he need not fear; the dogs would not touch Walburga; that He who had brought her safe there, would take her again safe home; and that from



Him she was come to be a physician to his house, if he had faith to believe in Him the Great Physician." The baron, on hearing her name, started hastily from his seat in the hall, and, asking why so noble a lady and a servant of God stood without his door, prayed her to enter, and led her in with much respect. She said she was not come without a cause ; and, having been waited on with great attention, at the time for retiring to rest she said she would pass the night in his daughter's chamber. Thither she was led ; the girl lay expiring, the death-chill was already upon her, and she was sobbing convulsively in the last struggle. The father groaned and burst into tears ; the heart-broken mother hung over her child in agony ; and the domestics prepared to make mourning. Walburga knelt and prayed, and continued all night in prayer, and God restored the soul of the maiden, and in the morning she arose in perfect health. The parents, full of gratitude, and astonished at the miracle, tremblingly offered her rich presents, but she refusing them, returned on foot to the monastery. The more that she received these signs of heavenly favour, so much the more she humiliated and dealt hardly with herself."

Little more remains to be told of her life. She lived sixteen years after the death of Winibald, and wrote his life, as well as an account of her brother Willibald's travels in Palestine, which she wrote down from his own mouth at Heidenheim. It is disputed whether these are really her compositions, or the work of one of her nuns : but there is internal evidence to show that the writing is hers ; and a comparison of the style with the life of St. Boniface, written by Willibald, will give strong evidence that they are the productions of a brother and sister ; for though from different hands, they bear strong

resemblances to each other in the turn of thought and expressions, which may be especially marked in the prefaces. The Latin of these pieces, though it would excite the classical critic's smile, yet has its own beauties; it is very expressive of feeling, and quaint and simple in descriptions; the words, so to speak, seem to try to imitate things. They would give no mean idea of her education, or of the education of those days; in fact, there is evidence that some of her companions at Winburn were very learned and accomplished women. Latterly Walburga laboured much with her distaff; and at such tasks as spinning and weaving she has been said already to have been a great workwoman. Her chief characteristic in her declining years was the maternal kindness and tender-heartedness, into which sorrow and time tempered her formerly buoyant and happy mind, so that in some points of character she has been compared with the blessed Mary. At length, to the great grief of the sisterhood and all her children in the Faith, over whom she had exercised such gentle rule, the holy abbess died, about the year 776. Her brother Willibald came to Heidenheim, and took her sacred body, and laid it by the side of her much-loved brother Winibald.

About sixty years afterwards, when Otgar, the sixth in succession, was bishop of Aichstadt, the monastery of Heidenheim was in a decayed and neglected condition, and while some repairs were going on, the tomb of St. Walburga was trodden on and desecrated by the work-people. In the night the saint appeared in a vision to Otgar, and asked him why he had dishonoured the sepulchre in which her body lay, expecting the Day of the Resurrection? "Be assured," said the vision, "that you shall have a sign that you have not

dealt well with me, nor with the house of God." In the morning, a monk named Renifred came hastily from Heidenheim, bringing news that the whole northern wall of the building, which was next day to have been roofed in, had fallen with a crash, in the middle of the night, flat to the ground. The bishop, seeing the threat of the vision completed, called his clergy together, visited and repaired the church, anointed it afresh with holy chrism, as having been desecrated, and after a time he went thither in solemn procession, with ringing of bells, and chantings, accompanied by the Archpriest Wilton, and Archpriest Adeling, and Omman, and Liubula, the abbess of the neighbouring convent of Monheim, and opening the grave with the chant of joy, raised the sacred relics, and carried them with tears of gladness to Aichstadt. Erchanbold, seventh in succession, succeeded Otgar. In his time, Liubula, the abbess of Monheim mentioned above, besought a portion of the relics of Walburga, consigning, on that condition, her abbey to the bishops of Aichstadt. Accordingly the tomb in which they had been laid by Otgar was opened, and the bones were found pure and clean, and moistened with a holy oil or dew, which no impurity would touch or soil. The priests lifting a portion with all reverence, carried it on a bier in holy procession to Monheim; as they approached to a town called Mulheim, which had been a residence of St. Boniface, an epileptic boy met the bier, and it was laid on him, and he recovered. "Immediately," says Wülffhard of Aichstadt, "there gushed forth in the same place, a smell so great and marvellous sweet, that the senses of those who preceded, and those who followed, and of those who bore the bier, could hardly endure to bear it." And other miracles ensued. Amongst these

was the cure of the Abbess Liubula, or as it would now be pronounced, "Lovely." She was sleeping out of the monastery for three nights, (according to the law of Suevia, which required this form in consigning property away, of which she was making over the rights to the bishop of Aichstadt,) being ill of the gout in the feet, when, as she slept, an ancient cleric with snowy hair seemed to say to her, "Liubula, why sleep you? rise and go to the church." She answered, "Why shall I go to church, when the matin bell has not yet sounded? nor can I go myself, except they come and carry me." "Arise quickly," he replied, "and go, for St. Willibald is come to see how you have laid his sister, along with a host of the heavenly company." Immediately she rose, and went quickly to the church, which she entered perfectly restored, and gave thanks to God and the holy virgin Walburga. She is said to have been canonized by Pope Adrian II., about the year 870, after the translation by Otgar to Aichstadt, and her name received into the catalogue of saints.

A vast number of other cures are recorded before the close of the same century, and the shrine of St. Walburga became famous through all that country, and pilgrimages were made frequently to it. Special cures seem to have been wrought on those who had fallen into disease through an easy, self-indulgent course of life, into which the good-hearted merriment of Germans and English is apt to be degraded, and mercies shown to careless, thoughtless, childish people, such as have the particular faults of a joyous and happy disposition. Over these Walburga herself had gained the victory; an innocent cheerfulness of temper, which thinks no evil, and has known little of it, is apt unconsciously to slide into great and even dangerous excesses, though

such recover more quickly from them, as it were, without effort, because of their natural goodness of heart. The dangers of such a temper are like those that beset the path of the wandering fawn among the hills, when the mists veil the precipices along whose brink it is skipping, and the evening wolf is near within the thicket. They need to be awakened to perils that surround them, and to be cured of their silly wilfulness.

A lively healthy person, of the name of Irchinbald, who had passed his life joyously, and was therefore probably in danger of becoming a sot or a glutton, was seized with such a loathing for all food, that for upwards of half a year he could swallow no nourishment except a little vegetable and yolk of egg with difficulty. When reduced from his former healthy and full habit to the last state of debility, his pulse scarcely beating, and skin scarcely covering his bones, he fell into a gentle sleep, and heard a voice bid him "go to Monheim, and ask there to drink of the consecrated wine that three nuns by the altar would give him, and he should recover through the prayers of Walburga." He obeyed, and found it as he was told, and as soon as he had drunk, his appetite returned, his stomach no longer refused food, and he asked for bread, and ate. It is no sin to supply the natural appetite; but if a harmless desire is not watched, it easily runs out into some acquired unhealthy habit, which, like some foul excrescence, distorts and disfigures the soul. The fisherman in the Arabian tale let loose a little fume from a vessel he had drawn from the sea, but it grew and grew until the smoke filled the sky, and gathered into the form of a gigantic and terrible genie.

A maid-servant of a family, named Frideride, who was a very good and obedient servant, and beloved by

her master and mistress, was seized with craving appetite which nothing could satisfy. She increased in size until she became a burden to herself, and became gouty or dropsical in the feet. Being very miserable she consulted with her friends, and petitioned her mistress that she might be allowed to visit St. Walburga's shrine. Permission being gladly given, she went, and her feet were cured, but the craving appetite continued until having confessed herself to Sister Theodilda, and bewailed with much shame and abhorrence her unnatural longing and gluttony, by her advice she received from Father Raimund some consecrated bread; after eating this she felt a loathing for food, which so continued, that for six weeks she received no food except the blessed Sacrament, her stomach rejecting all other food. Sister Theodilda, seeing her reduced to excessive thinness and weakness, begged her with much earnestness and reproof to drink some beer which she brought her, she complied, though unwilling, but it gushed immediately from her mouth and nostrils, and afterwards they pressed her no more; she continued to exist, a miracle, with scarcely any nourishment for three years, always blessing the holy maid Walburga, who had freed her from her loathsome obesity and longing: thus it is that the heavenly manna, suiting all tastes, can overcome all desire of earthly food.

In like manner a story was told, and believed, of a little girl whose chief fault was overfondness for play; how that whilst gaily amusing herself with a ball near the monastery, to her great affliction when she caught it from her companions she found it to stick to her hand as if glued. She ran in grief to pray at the shrine, and was freed from her fright by the ball loosening and coming away.



The same reproof was thrice repeated to a woman who continued her spinning on festival days,—the distaff clung to her hand; at last being frightened out of her wilfulness she was freed from her punishment, and cured of her disobedience at Walburga's tomb.

A person who came into the church to pray, thoughtlessly and irreverently kept his rough gauntlets or gloves upon his hands as he joined them in posture of prayer, and he felt them suddenly stript off him and gone; he was much terrified and ashamed of his negligence, and afterwards as he recounted what had happened to him they appeared lying before him, restored by a miracle. All these have the character of a gentle mother correcting the idleness and faults of careless and thoughtless children with tenderness.

But the most remarkable and lasting miracle attesting the holy Walburga's sanctity, to which allusion has already been made, is that which reckons her among the saints who are called "Elæophori" or "unguentiferous," becoming almost in a literal sense olive-trees in the courts of God. These are they from whose bones a holy oil or dew distils. That oil of charity and gentle mercy which graced them while alive, and fed in them the flame of universal love in their death, still permeates their bodily remains. Such are said to have been holy Nicholas, Bishop of Myra; Demetrius, Martyr of Thessalonica; John, by surname the Merciful; Lawrence the Martyr; Andrew the Apostle; and Matthew the blessed Evangelist. These all were distinguished by the attribute of mercy, they were men of mercy, of whom it is said that "they are blessed;" and from their bowels flowed rivers of oil, fed by those dews which fall upon the head, and run down to the beard and skirts of the clothing, the dew of Hermon



which falls upon the head of those who love the brethren.

Of this tender mercy Walburga's heart was full, even to overflowing, while she lived; and in death, like a healing stream of compassion for mankind's infirmities, it trickled from her bones. It has been already said, that when her remains were translated from Heidenheim they were beheld moist with dew and odoriferous. They were laid in an altar-tomb of marble stone at Aichstadt, and from it, year by year, at certain seasons, a fontanel distilled, flowing more freely at the time of the blessed sacrifice, which, drop by drop, fell into a silver shell placed to receive it. "You may see," says the account, "the drops sometimes larger, sometimes less, like a hazel nut, or of the size of a pea, dropping into the silver bowl from beneath the stone-slab on which they hang. If the oil when carried away any whither is handled irreverently, or in any way disrespectfully treated, it evaporates away; it is therefore kept with great reverence, and stored in a holy place. If the vessel placed to receive it is not placed under directly, so as to catch it when it falls, the oil hangs in clustered drops, as if in a bunch, like hanging grapes, or honey in a comb, and refuses to run; nor will it fall into the phial except it be perfectly clean. When the state of Aichstadt" (says Philip the Bishop) "lay under an interdict the sacred fount ceased. This sentence was passed on account of heavy wrongs done to the bishops by the neighbouring barons and estates. It was stayed until the Church regained its rights; and then the bishop, barefoot, and without his full robes, having proclaimed a fast, went up to the church, and with all the people prayed the city might not be deprived of such a benefit: and upon the celebration of

the mass the oil flowed abundantly. According to the same author, it was customary twice in the year, on St. Mark's day and on the Feast of the Translation of St. Walburga, for the priests and clergy in procession, after the office, to taste of the holy oil as a remedy for soul and body; he himself attests to having received a bodily cure from it. Many others are recorded, one an interesting one of later times, when a citizen of Aichstadt, named Müller, recovered by use of it his eyesight, which was nearly gone: he too was a merciful man, for knowing himself the loss, he pitied much the blind, and commanded his wife and children that no blind person be ever suffered to leave his door without an alms.

The same flow of oil or dew is related of the blessed Catharine, of St. Elizabeth Landgravine of Hesse, of St. Euphemia of Byzantium, of St. Agnes of Tuscany, women whose souls, like that of Walburga, were touched with true compassion; whose bosom, like her's, melted by divine love, was filled with the milk of human kindness, and was full of sympathy with men afflicted: for such is the effect of heavenly grace, that whereas the heart of man is naturally hard and dry, like the parched and stony rock of the arid wilderness, selfish in extreme, and refusing to succour others in their distress and weariness; yet when it is touched by the wand of Moses, that is, by the spear which opened the second Adam's side, a rill of mercy flows forth in tenderness and love, and henceforth it feels as its own all the sorrows of mankind, and while joying with those that joy, it weeps with those that weep.

LIFE OF  
**St. Winibald,**

ABBOT, DIED 761.

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THE second son of King Richard the Saxon and Winna his wife was named Winibald. When his brother Willibald was sent to the monastery of Waltham to be made a monk, he was left to be educated at home, and continued in his father's house until the age of nineteen. It is remarkable in these two brothers that Willibald began life in monastic retirement, but ended it in the vigorous discharge of active duties; Winibald, on the contrary, began life in the freedom of a prince, but ended it a monk, and almost a hermit. Willibald learned his Psalter when a child of five; Winibald learned his when a man of twenty. The principles of religion sank deep into the mind of the former at an early age, and developed themselves afterwards into a life and character of active energy. The mind of the latter fixed itself upon the contemplation of these principles themselves, and seemed to find its end in searching them out and dwelling upon them; a difference likely to follow from the one coming to religion a child, the other a grown man; for thus it steals upon the first before the intellect is aware, to the second the know-

ledge itself, which is not already made one with the mind, becomes an object of pursuit. Thus the peculiar character of St. Winibald as a religious man seems to be a thirst after knowledge, and a desire to dwell upon the deep things of Divine love, as the hart pants after the stream.

A sickly constitution contributed much to form this turn of mind. His brother was sickly as a child, but robust in manhood; Winibald from the time of the fever with which he and his brother were both seized in Rome, seems never to have been strong, and died at the age of sixty bedridden and quite infirm.

His separate history begins when his brother left him at Rome to go to Palestine. His health probably prevented him from being one of the pilgrims to the Holy Land; and he stayed at Rome while his brother and fellow-pilgrims went away. There he first received the tonsure, and during his illness he had learned the Psalter by heart, and given himself up to the study of Scripture, in which he became deeply versed, and excited the admiration of his companions by his learning. Already hospitia or houses of refuge for pilgrims from England had been established in Rome, and he was probably received into one of these, together with the remainder of the followers of the two princes from England. It may be argued from the eagerness with which he now plunged into the study of Divine things, that he had not been so devoutly disposed in his earlier years, until the call of his brother to leave an earthly kingdom, and the death of his sainted father at Lucca, and his sickness at Rome, had awakened a deeper sense of religion.

Seven years passed away, and at the end of that time he wished to visit England again. His chief reason

for doing so, was to preach a pilgrimage among his friends and relations at home, and exhort them to follow the course which he had found so effectual in his own case in weaning him from the world. Accordingly he departed for England, and about the very same time his brother must have returned from his long and perilous travel in the Holy Land. Perhaps St. Wini-bald, after so long an absence, despaired of his return, or perhaps he carried back to England an account of his safe arrival at Monte Casino; but he does not appear to have seen him.

He was received with great joy by his friends at home, and went from house to house, and town to town, preaching a pilgrimage to Rome; and again a considerable number resolved to leave their homes, and accompany him back again thither. Among these was a younger brother, probably a half brother to him, and own brother of Walburga, then a nun at Wimburn, whom no doubt he went and saw, but she did not accompany him abroad at this time.

Thus again a number of Anglo-Saxon wanderers adventured forth to a foreign clime, seeking St. Peter's shrine. It will be said, by way of blame and ridicule, that men in those days were very fond of roving, and that if they wanted to be very religious, they might have found enough to do at home. Precise people will never look rightly at the principle which, when England was merry England, made men's hearts love the forest glade better than the crowded town, and the skylark's note better than the cries of the throng; which made men love to recount tales of King Arthur's chivalry and wild Robin Hood, and think of liberty and freedom, not with the licentious longing of a modern free-thinker, but with the generous romance of a loyal and

a loving heart. The days of free foresters and knightly adventures are not only past and gone, but long have been, in all respects, condemned and frowned down in scorn by the mighty potentate, the world's opinion. Yet the Englishman's heart ought still to acknowledge the solemn religious feeling from which sprang the idea of the "Search for the Holy Sangreall," and the rude, yet honest, love of justice exhibited in the tales of "Forest Days." Something akin to these, though in a truer and higher sense, was the love of religious liberty; by which was then meant, not a disloyal desertion of the Articles of Christian Faith, but a desertion of the world with its traffic and all its ties.

Gladly, therefore, St. Winibald and his second troop of followers turned their steps to the then acknowledged centre of Christian unity and the basilica of the holy Peter; and there again, for a time, he remained buried in study and the retirement of a monastery.

After a lapse of time, St. Boniface, his mother's brother, came to Rome on his third visit there. He was then attracting the eyes of all Christendom by his wonderful conversions in Germany, and was honourably received by Pope Gregory. Many people crowded to see and hear him, and especially, as was natural, his own English countrymen. Thus he heard that his nephew Winibald was in Rome, and he sent for him to see and speak with him; and after conversation drew from him a promise to come and join himself to him in his labours in Germany. At the same time St. Boniface requested Pope Gregory to send him his other nephew Willibald, who, as he heard, after his return from the Holy Land, was a monk at Monte Casino. The Apostle of Germany then returned to his labours.

Shortly after this, St. Winibald, according to his pro-

mise, prepared to follow him. Accordingly, with the consent of his fellow-countrymen who chose to stay, and accompanied by a number who were willing to go with him, he took his journey through Lombardy, then peacefully disposed, and over the Alps through Bavaria to Thuringia, and finally presented himself before the Archbishop Boniface, who received him with much honour. "They discoursed much together," says the old narrative, "in holy and wholesome conversations, and from the volumes of God's Holy Writ searched out the hidden mysteries which they contain." Such meditations always seem to have been uppermost in Winibald's thoughts.

He was now consecrated priest, receiving his orders from the hands of St. Boniface. His age was probably between thirty-eight and forty when he was admitted to priest's orders. Seven churches were committed to his care in the newly converted Thuringia. These he was to instruct more fully in the knowledge of Christianity. From his deep knowledge of Scripture, St. Winibald was well fitted for preaching and explaining. His daily meditations had brought before him the chief prophecies, and their expositions, and our Lord's life, as given in the Gospels, was every day in his memory, and on his tongue, for on this he continually dwelt and preached: and thus he became, as it were, a "living Bible" to his people, together with a commentary: far more effectually so in propagating the faith when books were few or none, than many books in times when they are abundant.

His churches thus became fully instructed in the faith; and Odilo, Duke of Bavaria, hearing of the fame of his preaching, sent to beg that he would come and visit him, and extend the benefit of his teaching to his



people. The saint complied, and was received with all the honours that became him by Duke Odilo, who, with princely liberality, bestowed upon him, for Church purposes, rich donations of money and lands. These means he used to bring the country into ecclesiastical order; no easy task, for all things had fallen into a sad state. The sacraments were neglected, the nobles had contracted unlawful marriages, or lived in profligacy, and the common people, besides following their example, had fallen back into heathen superstitions. The preacher boldly rebuked the vices, both of rich and poor alike, sparing none who deserved censure; and by his vigorous measures and fearless zeal effected a restoration of discipline. He spoke the truth to all, whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear, and in the words of the Gospel, "if the house was worthy his peace rested upon it; but if not worthy, his peace returned to him again."

After this he returned to the archbishop at Mayence, by whom he was welcomed, and treated with great veneration and respect. Yet Boniface did not use him as a counsellor and adviser, or make him one of his bishops, as he did his brother Willibald. Willibald was more fitted to cope with the world. Winibald was wrapt in his contemplations, and his place was that of a father abbot among his monks. Accordingly, it was not long before he found fault with Mayence: as a place of residence, it was too busy for him; and the abundance of Rhine wine made it a dangerous place for his monks. So he went to his brother Willibald, at Aichstadt, and by his advice retired to the secluded valley of Heidenheim, on the sources of Danube. He purchased a spot of ground for a monastery, and afterwards the people of the country endowed it with church

lands. Thither he retired with his sister Walburga, who had now joined her brothers in Germany. And thus, each by different circumstances, the three sainted children of St. Richard were all brought together again, born in the same English home, divided from one another, in different climes, the greater part of their lives, and meeting together at last as missionaries in a wild German forest land.

It is a primitive picture which follows. St. Wimbald, with his axe in hand, clearing away the forest brake, and plucking up the brambles and thistles to form a garden around a small cluster of huts, the germ of the future monastery. After a while the church-minster and abbey of Heidenheim arose amid the woodland scene, under the monks' laborious hands. And thus the saint was settled in such a place as his soul had desired. He was an abbot in a wild.

The forests which once clothed England with broad and stately oaks, rising from the brake of hawthorn or green holly, with the warm fern beneath, are either now no more, or have only left remnants to show what they once have been. The pine-trees around the Danube and the Rhine no longer spread themselves to a vast extent, covering whole regions in untrodden solitudes. The woods of the new world remain to tell the wanderer what our old forests were, when he ventures to break into the stillness of their deep repose. There the profound silence declares the vast extent of the woodland. Every sound is heard—the distant running of the river, and the strange voices of the woods, the notes of birds and the cries of wild creatures, some joyous and musical, others harsh and terrible, or plaintive and melancholy—all these are fitted to compose the mind to thoughtful meditation; but above all, the ancient trees

themselves, with their heavy nodding leaves and wrinkled bark, seamed with the course of many years, are so many preachers, and, like white-headed old men of former days, seem to say that an eternal repose of yesterday is gone before, and a morrow of eternal peace is yet to come. Men of narrow reasoning will smile at the supposition that the woods and wild animals can fall into the scheme of theology, and preach to the heart the all-pervading principles of religion; but they forget that God's works have a unity of design throughout, and that the Author of nature and of revealed religion is one.

Yet, meditative as he was, Winibald was not solely occupied in the contemplative life. The greatest preachers against the world's wickedness have been at the same time the most retired of men. Hermitlike, and gentle as he was, when evil principles were to be rebuked, he girded himself like a warrior to the fight. The moral condition of the neighbouring inhabitants of the soil realized the melancholy analogies of the bears and wolves that roamed and ravined in the forests around; they lived in idolatry, in unlawful marriages and concubinage, and practised necromancy and used divination and devilish incantations. Against these evil practices the saint went forth, burning with zeal, like a knight to a crusade. He contradicted, rebuked, and punished; and, however painful the separation might be, divorced those unlawfully married: pulling up and rooting out the moral evils around him, as he had plucked up with his hands the briars and thistles of the wilderness. His conduct awakened the wild and savage wrath of the inhabitants, and many times they laid in wait to kill him, and plotted to burn his monastery. But wisdom and reason in the end prevailed over brute violence; their angry passion subsided; and the monastery

increased in numbers, and was endowed with possessions, and he was revered as a pastor and a father. Thus years rolled on, and the holy man still continued ever pondering on pages of holy writ, or reading and explaining, or singing praises and repeating psalms—whether he ate or drank, or whatever he did, while his body was mechanically engaged, his mind still hovered around sacred meditations, like the bee at the flower-bell.

At length, when he now was fifty-seven years old, his bodily infirmities increased much upon him. His secret severities, “known,” says the writer of his life, “only to God and to himself,” doubtless assisted much to bring on this decay; but, from the time of his sickness at Rome, he had always been afflicted with either paralysis of the limbs, or perhaps gout or rheumatism, and now for the last three years of his life he became a cripple. If he endeavoured to move from Heidenheim, he could only make small journeys, and these brought on a relapse. Once during this time he went into Franconia, to visit Megingozus, the bishop of Wirzburg, successor of Burchard, and coming to the monastery of Fulda, fell so sick, that he lay for three weeks unable to move. His uncle, the great and holy Winfrid, had now finished his course, martyred in his old age, and his body lay at Fulda. Here St. Winibald thought he should die too; but at the end of three weeks recovered, and went on to another town, where again he had a relapse, and lay for another week, unable to proceed. At last he came to Wirzburg, and conversed with Megingozus, his uncle’s friend. Having stayed three days, he returned to Heidenheim.

Weak and weary as his body was, his mind was strong within; and although he had found travel so hard in his pilgrimage to Fulda and visit to Wirzburg, yet he re-

solved to make a longer one to St. Benedict, at Monte Casino, and end his days there. Immediately he sent a messenger thither, to ask the abbot and brotherhood for leave to come. They gladly sent answer that he would be welcome, and further prayed him to come. His desire, doubtless, was to pay a devout visit to the founder of the order before he died. His uncle was a Benedictine, as well as his brother and much-loved sister Walburga ; and when he professed himself a monk at Rome, he no doubt became a Benedictine. Upon receiving the answer of his messenger, he prepared to go ; but first he sent for his brother Willibald, from Aichstad, and other friends, to tell his intention and ask their leave. When they came, and he told them his purpose, they all opposed his departure. They bade him consider his weakness and infirmities, and how utterly unfit he was for travel, and prayed him to remain in his own quiet retreat of Heidenheim, so suitable for an invalid, among his own monks and loving children in the faith, whom by his departure he would bereave of their abbot and father.

The good abbot complied, and laid aside his devoutly intended pilgrimage, which in his state was almost impracticable. Next to Christian magnanimity in death, how great is Christian magnanimity in disease ! The poor feeble body, full of pain and weakness, forgets its incapacities and fleshly ills, when mighty principle carries the soul away. The triumph over sickness is a beautiful spectacle, to many men a harder trial than to descend into the battle, and look death in the face. There is so much wearing and weariness of soul in long protracted suffering ; so much temptation to impatience in feebleness and incapacity ; yet just as the Christian saint lies meekly down to die, like an infant to his slum-

ber, free from all the terrors which the speech of the Danish prince in the tragedy, pictures in a horrible dream ; so it is amid his sick-bed sorrows ; still the same calm repose attends him, and the same gentle patience ; the brave spirit within is vigorous, and bears kindly up its weak and wasted companion.

And now the last scene of the servant of God drew nigh. He was unable to move from his cell ; and since now he could not enter the church, he bade them bring and place an altar in the side of his cell, that thereon, when his sickness would allow, he might celebrate mass, a thing which, when his health permitted, he day by day had never ceased to do. What with constant sickness, and what with fast and vigil, his life had been a very martyrdom ; and now perceiving that his end was approaching, and that God was about to take him from this valley of tears to the land of eternal recompence, he sent for his brother Willibald to come to him for the last time. When Willibald was come, which was on a Friday, in the year of our Lord 761, and when his friends and monks were gathered round him, among whom was his sister and affectionate nurse Walburga, Winibald, perceiving his death approaching, addressed them as they surrounded his bed :

“ Little children, and dear brothers, be wise in time, and prudent. Make your lives and ways agreeable to the will of God. Love one another, and keep the true catholic faith always ; continue to keep the duties of monastic life in all things as we have shown and taught you, and as you have promised to God to do. From the rule of life and vow of obedience which you have made to me, and by which while I lived I held you bound, I give you full absolution ; but from the duties you owe to God, and the rule of life you have promised



to Him to keep, I give you no absolution, nor is it in my power to free you from it ; pay it duteously to God according as you are able. Take my indulgence for every word or deed in which by carelessness or forgetfulness you have failed in obedience to me ; and in whatever, in word or deed, I have chanced to cross any of you, do you all forgive me : and so may you remain in God's peace, to whose keeping I leave you, and suffer me to go on my appointed way out of this life in peace and charity, for the time of my departure is at hand, and my soul is ready to go from the prison of the body to its recompence of reward and a rest from its labours, through the merciful goodness of God our tender Father, to which may He of his mercy grant that I may come !" With these sweet and peaceful words he bade his sorrowing friends and the mourning monks farewell ; and then, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, " Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit ;" and sitting as he was, raised up in the bed, he gave up his beatified spirit. This took place in the evening of the Saturday after St. Willibald came, and a week before Christmas-day, in the year 761. Then they took his body, and washed it, and carried it to the church ; and there they continued beside it all night long, praising God with psalms, and chantings, and hymns, until the morning of Sunday ; and then they laid him in a new stone coffin, and buried him in the church. The coffin had been hewn for many years before he died, and stood in his cell waiting for the day of his death. He himself gave prophetic warning of the day he should die, and had given all the directions how they should lay him clothed in his sacerdotal robes. He was sixty years of age : he came to Heidenheim in 751, and so had been abbot ten years.



The writer of St. Winibald's life transcribed it from the account which his sister wrote of him : and of what follows she declares herself to be a witness. She was one of the nuns of the convent adjoining the abbey of Heidenheim.

For seven days after he was buried, a priest, who was his friend and favourite disciple, said masses and sang chants perpetually, relieved by another priest, day by day through the week. One day, when one of them, very early in the morning, entered the church to say mass, upon opening the door a most sweet fragrant odour breathed on him, and the whole church was filled with a warm-scented breath like thick smoke. He was much astonished, and ran out to bring some one as witness of the miracle ; but when he had called in some other people who were standing without, it was gone to them, and none besides himself was able to perceive or smell it. Again, it often happened in that church, that a light, which was over the place where the holy confessor's body lay, burned, though not lit by the hand of man. At another time a maid of the kindred of St. Winibald, who for two years had been struck with paralysis (the affliction of the saint himself) in the right arm and hand, came to the place of his sepulture, and her withered arm was restored to its use. These were the beginning of the miracles by which God showed how pleasing in his sight the life of the holy man had been.

Fifteen years afterwards, St. Willibald determined to rebuild the church and abbey of Heidenheim on a more magnificent scale. Probably it had been before chiefly a wooden edifice. The miracles at his brother's tomb made him wish to lay his reliques in a fitting shrine. Accordingly, with a great number of clergy and people, he dug, and laid the foundation stones for the

future building. While he and the people were thus piously occupied, the clock-bell of the church struck out of its own accord, though all the people witnessed that no man's hand had moved it, and were much astonished at the miraculous sound. The church was three years in building ; at the end of two years, the chapel intended for St. Winibald's chapel and shrine was completed, but the whole church was not finished.

Into this chapel, when it was ready, his bones were to be borne, and there laid. On St. John Baptist's day, one whom Winibald resembled in austere devotion, they proceeded to open the grave. The bishop with a priest and his deacons, approached the spot, and raised the stone which lay over it, and began to dig to the coffin. The body had now laid in the grave nearly sixteen years, only three months short of that time ; St. Willibald naturally did not wish to see the body of his dear brother in unsightly decay, and retired without the church ; the priest and deacon were left to disinter the body, and, for fear of the effluvia, wrapt a cloth round their nostrils. It did not need, for when they penetrated the vault, and lifted the coffin lid, there the body lay comely and fair, as if he had died but yesterday. Nothing was altered ; not even a hair had fallen from his head, for saints are beautiful still in death. With joy and wonder they lifted him uninjured gently from the grave.

Willibald, in doubt and distress, had been waiting the result without ; but how great was his glad surprise, when his brother, whom he thought decayed in death, came forth in freshness and beauty from the tomb ! God, who had raised Lazarus when four days dead from the grave, had kept the blessed Winibald uncorrupt for so many years. The bishop and clergy entered the church,

Willibald himself said mass, and the whole people sung, and the chapel, which stood at the east end, and the church was dedicated to the Holy Saviour, and after the solemnity was over, the body was exposed to view, and the people poured in in crowds to gaze upon it, as it lay whole and perfect for all to touch and handle.

Then the bishop, giving thanks to God, first came, and stooping gave his brother the kiss of peace, and afterwards his sister, who did not long survive this, and then his dear disciples in order. They then raised the body, and carried it to the chapel, and laid it in the new made shrine; the people crowded that if possible they might at least touch some part of him. And as the procession moved, all the people, says the narrative, "cried, Kyrie eleison!" and after he was laid in the new chapel, the bishop sang mass there, and when the mass was over, and all the solemnity was over, they gave thanks to God and the blessed Saint Winibald. And all the people returned rejoicing to their homes.

On the next day, about the same hour of the day that the saint had been carried to the shrine, a woman came to the chapel, one side of whose body was paralyzed. As soon as she was seated at the shrine her dead limbs began to tingle and revive, the life-blood returned to them, and she rose restored to health. Upon her recovery she took the veil. Those particularly who suffered under the same trials that the holy man himself had so patiently endured, seem to have found mercy.

So again, at another time, one of those unhappy wanderers, who in the times of ancient Christendom were to be found in penitential guise, with the mark of Cain upon them, until they had expiated their guilt by tears of long sorrow and public shame, was freed from his chains at St. Winibald's shrine. It was the custom in

the case of crimes of a deep dye, to send the man of awful sin on a ceaseless pilgrimage ; a chain was riveted on him to proclaim the child of sin ; and thus, a warning spectacle, he dragged his fettered limbs from shrine to shrine, declaring and confessing his guilt, and praying for forgiveness, until either death, or the mercy of God, released him. It was such an one found grace in the chapel of St. Winibald ; the manacles with which both his hands were bound fell off as he was weeping and praying, and making the sign of the cross he arose and went away rejoicing.

Many other people, who had withered or contracted limbs, were cured there, and blessing God who had been pleased thus to get Himself honour both in the life and in the death of his patient and suffering servant, returned full of faith and thankful from the monastery of St. Winibald.

THE END.











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